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MACAULAY'S  
ESSAY ON WILLIAM PITT  
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MACAULAY'S ESSAY  
ON  
WILLIAM PITT  
(EARL OF CHATHAM)

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## PREFACE

The editor of this edition of Macaulay's *Essay on Pitt* may perhaps be allowed to state the objects that he has kept before himself in preparing it for the press.

The *Life* has been written with the intention of bringing Macaulay within the range of the student's sympathy. Our great writers are too often portrayed as intellectual prodigies rather than as human beings. An attempt, therefore, has been made to exhibit something of Macaulay's disposition and character, his benevolent care of his relatives, and his devotion to duty—in short, to present him in those aspects where he comes into comparison with the average man.

The article on his style is intended to bring out the chief characteristics of Macaulay's prose by means of illustrative extracts chosen as far as possible from the *Essay on Pitt*. It is hoped that by this method the critical remarks, while applicable to all Macaulay's writings, will yet be thoroughly appreciated by a student who has read no more of Macaulay than this one essay.

The article on Macaulay's estimate of Pitt has been written to show that in enumerating Pitt's inconsistencies Macaulay does not make due allowance for extenuating circumstances, that he also overlooks Pitt's extensive use of sea-power, and considers him too much as a politician and too little as one of the founders of Greater Britain.

Where this edition is used for class-teaching, it is recommended that Macaulay's Essay be first read rapidly through, the attention of the class being directed very occasionally to the *Chronological Table*, and to such of the *Notes* as bear immediately on Pitt's career. The articles on Macaulay's estimate of Pitt and Macaulay's style should be taken next, and then the Essay should be read through again.

The *Notes* are not meant to be an instrument of torture to the student. They are not to be crammed up. With the exception of a few, which the master should point out, they are to be read or not, as the student pleases. The writer certainly hopes that the student will be tempted to read them, and, in doing so, be stimulated to turn to fuller sources of information concerning the many interesting personages who figure in Macaulay's pages.

The *Synopsis* will serve to show how admirably Macaulay arranges his material. A young essay-writer may study it with advantage. Further, in glancing over it and attempting to recall the omitted details, the student will find a ready test of his knowledge of the Essay. The *Index* also will prove useful for the same purpose.

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# INTRODUCTION

## I. MACAULAY'S LIFE

THOMAS BABINGTON MACAULAY was born on the 25th of October, 1800, at Rothley Temple in Leicestershire. On both sides he belonged to sober, middle-class stock, for his father descended from a line of Scotch Presbyterian ministers, while his mother was the daughter of a Quaker bookseller settled in Bristol. From the age of three he was an omnivorous reader, and in his eighth year he tried his hand at literary composition. A *Compendium of Universal History*, and a poem called the *Battle of Cheviot*, were among these early attempts. His excellent mother, though she was naturally proud of her son's ability, took care that he should not be spoiled by overpraising. "We never appear", she wrote, "to regard anything he does as anything more than a schoolboy's amusement." To the boy himself she gave advice that might well be laid to heart by many writers young and old. "I know you write", she says in a letter to him, "with great ease to yourself, and would rather write ten poems than prune one. All your pieces are much mended after a little reflection; therefore take your solitary walks and think over each separate thing. Spare no time or trouble, and render each piece as perfect as you can, and then leave the event without one anxious thought."

Zachary Macaulay, his father, was a man of the highest Scotch type. Stern, conscientious, self-sacrificing, he pursued at all costs the course which he believed to be right. Entering the service of the Sierra Leone Company, he was



at one time Governor of Sierra Leone, and afterwards London Secretary of the Company. He next went into African trade as a merchant, and prospered and grew rich. Meanwhile he had joined the ranks of the Anti-slavery agitators. His industry and his personal experience of the evils of slavery during his residence in Africa made him an invaluable ally to the leaders of the movement. But while he laboured for the good of humanity, he neglected his own. His affairs fell into a ruinous condition, and he was at last compelled to retire from business. Nevertheless he had his reward, for he lived to see the passing of the Emancipation Act in 1833, and he has left behind him a name that is still gratefully remembered with those of Wilberforce and Clarke.

Very unwillingly did young Macaulay quit his loving parents and pleasant Clapham home to go to a private school near Cambridge. In the home-sick letters of this period we discern the first signs of that family affection which afterwards exercised so strong an influence upon his career.

At this school Macaulay laid the basis of a scholarly knowledge of Latin and Greek, and at the same time found opportunities for much general reading, poetry and prose fiction being the subjects to which he turned by the bias of his nature. There can be no doubt that he was allowed to follow his own choice too freely in these early years. It would have been better for him if he had been made to give some of his attention to those severer studies which demand clear and close thinking rather than a sympathetic imagination. "I often regret," he wrote at a later date, "and even acutely, my want of a Senior Wrangler's knowledge of physics and mathematics, and I regret still more some habits of mind which a Senior Wrangler is pretty certain to possess." On this defect in Macaulay's training we shall not dwell any longer at present, as we shall have to recur to it in considering his style.

In 1813 Macaulay went up to Trinity College, Cambridge.

Though he won a Craven Scholarship, and twice carried off the Chancellor's Medal for English Verse, he did not compete for the highest Classical Honours, the reason being that he was debarred from doing so by his failure to win a place in the Mathematical Tripos. His classical attainments, however, did not go unrewarded, and in 1824 he was elected a Fellow of Trinity.

By this time he had made some reputation as a writer. His contributions to Knight's *Quarterly Magazine* include the stirring war-poems *Jury* and *Naseby*, and several prose articles, not often referred to now, but marked by the clear and vigorous utterance always so characteristic of Macaulay. In 1824 he was asked to contribute to the *Edinburgh Review*, and in the next year appeared his famous essay on Milton, which not only placed its author in the front rank of contemporary writers, but heralded a new epoch in essay-writing. "Up to this time," says Dean Milman, "with some excellent exceptions, the articles in reviews had confined themselves to notices, more or less excursive, of new books, and to discussions of the political or polemic questions of the day. The article now aspired to be a full dissertation on the history of any great period, on the life of any great man of any time, on the writings, on the influence, on the merits of authors of the highest fame. From a review it became an historical, biographical, philosophical essay."

During the years that followed close on his Cambridge career, Macaulay's family affection, to which allusion has already been made, was exhibited in a most praiseworthy manner. His father had failed in business, and the care of the parents and a large family fell on Macaulay and his brother Henry. Between them they paid off their father's debts, and made suitable provision for their brothers and sisters. Macaulay endured the necessary privations with the greatest cheerfulness and courage, though he was at one time reduced so far as to sell the gold medals which he had won at Cambridge.

In 1824 he had been called to the Bar, and, though never regarding the law as his regular profession, he travelled the Northern Circuit for some time. In 1828 he was appointed a Commissioner in Bankruptcy, and two years later, through the interest of Lord Lansdowne, he was returned M.P. for Calne. His maiden speech was delivered in support of the Bill for the Removal of Jewish Disabilities. He was now rising rapidly in public esteem both as a politician and a writer. Invitations to the houses of the great showered upon him. Though he objected strongly to being lionized, he felt bound to give up many valuable hours to the demands of London society, and yet he contrived to keep his pen busily at work. Several essays, among them the first of those on Lord Chatham, were produced in the hurry and stress of this period. When he had any time to spare, he spent it at his father's house in Great Ormond Street. Here with his sisters he would romp about like a great boy, or amuse them with absurd puns and strings of extempore rhymes. Sometimes he charmed them with his wonderful conversation. "I have just been looking round our little drawing-room," writes his sister Margaret, "as if trying to impress every inch of it on my memory, and thinking how in future years it will rise before my mind as the scene of many hours of light-hearted mirth; how I shall again see him, lolling indolently on the old blue sofa, or strolling round the narrow confines of our room. With such a scene will come the remembrance of his beaming countenance, happy affectionate smile, and joyous laugh; while, with everyone at ease around him, he poured out the stores of his full mind in his own peculiarly beautiful and expressive language, more delightful here than anywhere else, because more perfectly unrestrained."

Macaulay entered the House of Commons in time to take part in the debates on the Reform Bill. Though bred a Tory, he had been converted to Whig doctrines at Cambridge. But he was no ardent revolutionary. He did not

expect the millennium would come as the consequence of the new scheme of parliamentary representation, but he held that the scheme was both necessary and just, and supported it with enthusiastic eloquence. His speeches on this occasion won him a foremost place among parliamentary debaters, and his services to his party were recognized in 1832 by his appointment as Secretary to the Board of Control. This was his first practical acquaintance with Indian affairs, and paved the way to his acceptance in 1834 of the post of legal adviser to the Supreme Council of India.

At this break in Macaulay's career we may pause to note some examples of his unselfish and high-minded action in the arena of politics. Though he was at the time very hard pressed for money, he voted in favour of a bill by which his Commissionership of Bankruptcy was abolished, and he himself, as a consequence, left without any settled income. Again, when the Government introduced a Bill for the Emancipation of Slaves, he informed his colleagues that he could not support it, because it did not satisfy the expectations of his father. "He has devoted his whole life to the question," said Macaulay, "and I cannot grieve him by giving way when he wishes me to stand firm." To resign meant to lose the much-needed income derived from his Secretaryship to the Board of Control. Macaulay, nevertheless, handed in his resignation, but the Government, with a magnanimity equal to Macaulay's, refused to accept it. Though he both spoke and voted in this matter against his party, he was allowed to retain his office. Another instance of Macaulay's manly directness is to be found in a letter intended for the perusal of the electors of Leeds at a time when he was offering himself as their representative in Parliament. "Nothing is easier than for a candidate to avoid unpopular topics as long as possible, and, when they are forced upon him, to take refuge in evasive and unmeaning phrases. Nothing is easier than for him to give extravagant promises while an election is depending, and to forget

them as soon as the return is made. I will take no such course. I do not wish to obtain a single vote on false pretences. Under the old system I have never been the flatterer of the great. Under the new system I will not be the flatterer of the people. The truth, or what appears to me to be such, may sometimes be distasteful to those whose good opinion I most value. I shall nevertheless always abide by it, and trust to their good sense, to their second thoughts, to the force of reason, and the progress of time. If, after all, their decision should be unfavourable to me, I shall submit to that decision with fortitude and good-humour. It is not necessary to my happiness that I should sit in Parliament, but it is necessary to my happiness that I should possess, in Parliament or out of Parliament, the consciousness of having done what is right." There is no affectation here. Macaulay meant what he said, and in the course of a long and active public life he never once violated the spirit of these bold and wholesome words.

Accompanied by his sister, Hannah, afterwards better known as Lady Trevelyan, Macaulay set sail for India in February, 1834. On board ship he read insatiably. The following is his own list of the books he perused: the *Iliad*, the *Odyssey*, Virgil, Horace, Cæsar's *Commentaries*, Bacon's *Augmentis*, Dante, Petrarch, Ariosto, Tasso, Don Quixote, Gibbon's *Rome*, Mill's *India*, all the seventy volumes of Voltaire, Sismondi's *History of France*, and the seven thick folios of the *Biographia Britannica*. It is in this feverish addiction to reading that we discover the chief flaw of Macaulay's mental constitution. He shrank from the labour of thinking things out. When he had no good literature at hand, he turned to the trashiest fiction. When even that resource failed him, he amused himself by repeating what he had already stored up in his capacious memory. Brilliant in diction, copious in illustration, he yet remained a teacher of commonplaces, because he refused to examine the groundwork of his beliefs.

Arrived in India, Macaulay took his seat as a Member of the Council. He accepted also the Presidency of the Law Commission appointed to draw up a Penal Code for India. In addition to this, he was Chairman of the Committee of Public Instruction. The legal work, in which Macaulay had the assistance of able colleagues, has been highly praised by experts, and was, indeed, so satisfactorily done that very few amendments have been introduced into the Indian Penal Code since that time. In regard to the education of the natives, Macaulay was strongly in favour of abandoning the old training in Oriental literature, and substituting for it the study of European literature and science. The Committee was evenly divided, but Macaulay, trusting in the power of his pen, put the whole matter on paper, and succeeded in persuading the Government to adopt his recommendations. Thus, then, Macaulay left a permanent mark on both the law and the education of India. In spite, however, of the time that must have been consumed in the discharge of these public services, he managed to cover an immense range in his private reading. Nearly all the Greek and Roman classics were gone through, most of them twice at least. The essay on Bacon and some of the *Lays of Ancient Rome* also belong to this period.

His residence in the East came to an end in 1837. He had now realized a competency, and was anxious to devote himself wholly to literature, but the Whigs were in need of his active support. He was returned as member for Edinburgh, and shortly afterwards entered the Cabinet as Secretary at War. This diversion of Macaulay's energies into a political channel was a deplorable loss to literature. His great history was already planned. Some of it had been written. But it was now necessarily laid aside, and, though a time came when it was taken up again, the destined goal was never reached. In 1841 Lord Melbourne's Government resigned, and Macaulay was once more free. He continued to represent Edinburgh, but was exempt from the cares of office.

One of the tasks to which he now applied himself was the preparation for the press of the *Lays of Ancient Rome*. He had been engaged desultorily for some years on the ballads; two of them had been written in India, and sent to Dr. Arnold of Rugby for his criticism. While he was touring in Italy in 1838 and 1839, he was on the look-out for touches of local colour, and *Horatius* was actually composed at this time. At length in 1842 the *Lays* appeared. For one who during nearly twenty years had been distinguished as a writer of prose thus to confront the critics with a volume of verse was an undertaking of no slight risk. But Macaulay had not over-calculated his merits. The book was at once successful. Its clear-cut pictures, the energy and simplicity of the language, the rapidity of the action, the swing of the metre, and the glow of old-world patriotism appealed to learned and unlearned alike, and have by no means lost their attractiveness at the present day.

In 1843 Macaulay reissued the best of his essays in volume form. He was himself singularly modest in his estimate of their worth, regarding such productions as necessarily full of faults and destined to a life of six weeks only at the longest. But the piracy of American publishers, and their invasion of the English market, left him no choice except to bring out an author's edition. From that time to the present the essays have been continually reprinted. In spite of their defects, admitted, as we have just said, even by Macaulay himself, they have deservedly won the admiration of an immense circle of readers. They have inspired with a love of literature and history thousands of minds which but for them would have remained indifferent to such subjects. We may rank them high among the civilizing influences of the nineteenth century.

Though Macaulay felt that his newly-won leisure ought to be allotted to the execution of the great historical work which he had so long had in contemplation, his good-nature led

him to yield to the requests of Macvey Napier, and he still kept up his contributions to the *Edinburgh Review*. At length he made a firm stand, and throughout 1847 and 1848 refused to be drawn away from his *History*. The first instalment came out in 1848, and sprang at once into popularity, an edition of 3000 copies being disposed of in ten days. The original scheme of the work included the history of England from the Revolution to the death of George IV, but Macaulay's love of detail prevented him from getting beyond the death of his great hero, William III. Without this detail, however, his work would lack its most powerful charm, for it is by hundreds of intimate touches that he presents his characters before us as they lived and moved, and we seem, while we read, to be under the spell of a novelist rather than a historian. Macaulay has himself told us that history "should invest with the reality of human flesh and blood beings whom we are too much inclined to consider as personified qualities in an allegory; call up our ancestors before us with all their peculiarities of language, manners, and garb; show us over their houses, seat us at their tables, rummage through their old-fashioned wardrobes, explain the uses of their ponderous furniture". "I shall not be satisfied", he wrote to Macvey Napier, at the beginning of his historical labours, "unless I produce something which shall for a few days supersede the last fashionable novel on the tables of young ladies." Such was Macaulay's ideal, and he fully achieved it, to the delight of a numerous band of admirers. Above all writers he has succeeded in making history popular, and, in spite of the critics who allege that he is biassed by party feeling and deficient in general views, he still has the suffrages of the average man.

In 1847 Macaulay was for a time relieved of his parliamentary duties altogether, because in the general election of that year the people of Edinburgh rejected him. He had offended them by following the dictates of his conscience, and voting for the Maynooth Act, by which a large sum of



money was assigned to the support of the Roman Catholic College of Maynooth, in Ireland. Five years later, Edinburgh attempted to atone for the insult it had inflicted on a man whose political conduct had always been remarkable for disinterestedness, and Macaulay, though he would give no pledge of his future action, was returned at the head of the poll. About the same time his health underwent a serious change. Many years of hard work at last produced their effect on a constitution that had hitherto made equally light of mental and physical exertion. Heart-disease and asthma showed themselves, and Macaulay was more or less of an invalid for the rest of his life. In 1856 he settled himself at Holly Lodge, a charming villa at Campden Hill. Here he passed a cheerful and industrious existence, varying his historical labours with the care of his garden, and the entertainment of friends both young and old. To all forms of distress he was invariably generous, and it was no unusual thing for him to present some poor writer with twenty, thirty, or a hundred pounds. The last time that he used his pen was on the day of his death, when he signed a letter enclosing twenty-five pounds to a struggling curate. Honours crowded upon him towards the end of his life, and at length in 1857 he was raised to the peerage, a dignity that he did not long enjoy. Death came to him suddenly and without pain. "We found him in his library," writes his nephew, Sir G. O. Trevelyan, in the well-known *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay*, "seated in his easy-chair, and dressed as usual, with his book on the table beside him, still open at the same page. He had told his butler that he should go to his bed early, as he was very tired. The man proposed his lying on the sofa. He rose as if to move, sat down again, and ceased to breathe." This happened on the 28th of December, 1859. A few days later Macaulay was laid to rest with his brother-poets in Westminster Abbey. "We have lost", wrote Lady Trevelyan, "the light of our home, the most tender, loving, generous, unselfish, devoted of

friends. What he was to me for fifty years how can I tell? What a world of love he poured out upon me and mine! The blank, the void, he has left,—filling, as he did, so entirely both heart and intellect,—no one can understand.”

## 2. MACAULAY'S STYLE.

Most celebrated authors have a characteristic style. In some, as in Carlyle, we can trace the development of those features which we now regard as specially distinctive; in others, as in Dr. Johnson and Macaulay, we can trace no such development. Their earliest productions are marked by the same peculiarities as their last. Their style on its first appearance is full-grown. It will be instructive in this connection to quote a passage from a college essay of Macaulay's on the “Conduct and Character of William III”.

Lewis was not a great general. He was not a great legislator. But he was, in one sense of the words, a great king. He was a perfect master of all the mysteries of the science of royalty,—of all the arts which at once extend power and conciliate popularity,—which most advantageously display the merits, or most dexterously conceal the deficiencies, of a sovereign. He was surrounded by great men, by victorious commanders, by sagacious statesmen. Yet, while he availed himself to the utmost of their services, he never incurred any danger from their rivalry. His was a talisman which extorted the obedience of the proudest and mightiest spirits. The haughty and turbulent warriors whose contests had agitated France during his minority yielded to the irresistible spell, and, like the gigantic slaves of the ring and lamp of Aladdin, laboured to decorate and aggrandize a master whom they could have crushed. With incomparable address he appropriated to himself the glory of campaigns which had been planned and counsels which had been suggested by others. The arms of Turenne were the terror of Europe. The policy of Colbert was the strength of France. But in their foreign successes and their internal prosperity the people saw only the greatness and wisdom of Lewis.

In this extract we observe several of those mannerisms which are so highly characteristic of Macaulay's later work—the short, abrupt sentence, the studied antithesis, the picturesque literary allusion, the superlative statement.

Macaulay's style is pre-eminently rhetorical. As we read, we seem to be listening to the voice of an orator. The sentences ring out sharp and clear. We almost detect the pauses for applause. There is no subtlety of thought to perplex us. Plain views, based on that practical good sense which always goes straight to the heart of an English audience, are enunciated with such a hearty feeling of conviction, such a variety and fluency of phrase, such a wealth of illustration, that our judgment is taken captive for a time, and gives an assent which in a soberer mood it may be inclined to withdraw. Both in the Union at Cambridge, and afterwards in the House of Commons, Macaulay spoke with remarkable effect, and it is not improbable that his success as a speaker confirmed him in the use of rhetorical artifices as a writer.

Above all things Macaulay desired clearness, and it must be admitted that he secured it. An ambiguous expression cannot be found in his writings. His vocabulary, though ample, lies within the range of the average man, and is free from affectations. The Hellenisms of Milton, the Latinisms of Sir Thomas Browne, the Gallicisms of Horace Walpole, the Germanisms of Carlyle, have no parallels in Macaulay. His English is the English of a scholar who knows his meaning, and can produce the words to express that meaning both accurately and eloquently without rifling the forgotten stores of the past or adding inventions of his own to our language. Yet he does not scruple at times to draw forth a word from the limbo that is situated between slang and literature. In his opinion, however, such a word requires an apology, and must further justify itself by its appositeness and force.

These maxims were too much in vogue throughout the lower ranks of Walpole's party, and were too much encouraged by Walpole himself, who, from contempt of what is in our day vulgarly called *humbug*, often ran extravagantly and offensively into the opposite extreme (§ 46).

The word *humbug* had enjoyed at least a century of exist-

ence when Macaulay used it, but for all that he will not allow it to pass without a note of deprecation.

The desire to make himself thoroughly intelligible results very often in an accumulation of parallel clauses, all cast in the same mould. Of this we have an example in § 3.

He was in the right when he attempted to establish an inquisition, and to give bounties for perjury, in order to get Walpole's head. He was in the right when he declared Walpole to have been an excellent minister. He was in the right when, being in opposition, he maintained that no peace ought to be made with Spain till she should formally renounce the right of search. He was in the right when, being in office, he silently acquiesced in a treaty by which Spain did not renounce the right of search. When he left the Duke of Newcastle, when he coalesced with the Duke of Newcastle, when he thundered against subsidies, when he lavished subsidies with unexampled profusion, when he execrated the Hanoverian connection, when he declared that Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, he was still invariably speaking the language of a virtuous and enlightened statesman.

Such a persistent reiteration of one structure is not without its value for the ordinary reader. It spares him the trouble of attending to the form of the sentence, and leaves his mind free to receive the hammer-like impact of fact upon fact, while the long-continued similarity of expression serves to remind him that the statements thus similarly expressed belong to the same series. Even cultivated ears can tolerate this rhetorical artifice, if its occurrence is limited to rare and apt occasions, but when it is pressed into constant service, as in Macaulay's writings, it becomes a defect and not an ornament of style.

Macaulay studiously avoids long sentences, except when, as shown in the previous paragraphs, he repeats the same construction through a succession of clauses. His facts are flung out in curt, independent statements, so that they may strike hard and strike home. Though this device may goad a flagging reader to attention, it has its disadvantages, for a subordinate idea, which ought to be relegated to a subordinate clause, is often thrown into undue prominence, and,

worse than this, the music of prose is sacrificed. Prose, to be musical, must have an involved structure, sentence within sentence; but Macaulay, desiring clearness, neglects this structure, and so fails to create those rising and falling harmonies which sound throughout the periods of our earlier English writers.

An author who is constantly aiming at effect may be expected to make use of antithesis, and Macaulay does not disappoint us. Sentence is balanced against sentence, clause against clause, word against word. When he is engaged in ridiculing Mr. Thackeray's consistent eulogy of Pitt's inconsistent career, Macaulay finds an excellent occasion for introducing the antithetical form of statement. This passage has already been quoted as an example of the accumulation of parallel clauses. The student should turn back to it, and read it as a specimen of antithesis. In § 46 Macaulay resorts to the same method in order to accentuate the points of difference between Pitt and Fox.

The loose political morality of Fox presented a remarkable contrast to the ostentatious purity of Pitt. The nation distrusted the former, and placed implicit confidence in the latter. But almost all the statesmen of the age had still to learn that the confidence of the nation was worth having. While things went on quietly, while there was no opposition, while everything was decided by the favour of a small ruling junto, Fox had a decided advantage over Pitt; but when dangerous times came, when Europe was convulsed with war, when Parliament was broken up into factions, when the public mind was violently excited, the favourite of the people rose to supreme power, while his rival sank into insignificance.

Antithesis is so frequently employed in the sharp and pointed utterances called epigrams that we are not surprised to find Macaulay's sentences occasionally taking an epigrammatic form.

He was not the master, but the slave of his own speech (§ 29).

He had been trained in a bad political school, in a school, the doctrines of which were, that political virtue is the mere coquetry of political prostitution, that every patriot has his price, that Government can be

carried on only by means of corruption, and that the state is given as a prey to statesmen (§ 46).

The climax is a favourite figure of speech with Macaulay. He loves to hurry the breathless reader through a series of statements gradually increasing in impressiveness. We seem to be ascending a height; with every step the view expands, until at last we reach the summit and look down upon an ample prospect.

He had conciliated the king; he domineered over the House of Commons; he was adored by the people; he was admired by all Europe. He was the first Englishman of his time; and he had made England the first country in the world (§ 95).

Macaulay has a trick of arranging sentences, phrases, and words in groups of three, sometimes with a suggestion of climax. This trick is noticeable throughout the whole Essay, and, when once observed, is not unlikely to prove irritating to the reader. In § 45 we read:

His heart was a little cold, his temper cautious even to timidity, his manners decorous even to formality.

Again, in the same paragraph, Murray is said to have surpassed Pitt in correctness of taste, in power of reasoning, in depth and variety of knowledge. His eloquence is clear, placid, and mellow; he lacks energy, courage, and ambition; and longs for a position which is dignified, quiet, and secure.

Macaulay never understates his case. He is indeed so anxious to drive his points home that he insists and emphasizes with what is at times unnecessary vehemence. Even in this Essay, which is more restrained in tone than many of his Essays, he seldom makes mention of the Duke of Newcastle without some accompanying expressions of ridicule and contempt.

He could only mutter that it was very hard that Newcastle, who was not fit to be chamberlain to the most insignificant prince in Germany, should dictate to the King of England (§ 40).

Newcastle's love of power resembled Cutler's love of money. It

was an avarice which thwarted itself, a penny-wise and pound-foolish cupidity (§ 49).

Newcastle behaved like himself, that is to say, childishly and basely (§ 50).

The duke was scared out of his wits (§ 54).

In this perplexity Newcastle sent for Pitt, hugged him, patted him, smirked at him, wept over him, and lisped out the highest compliments and the most splendid promises (§ 57).

Newcastle now began to tremble for his place, and for the only thing which was dearer to him than his place, his neck (§ 62).

The old intriguer who, imbecile as he seemed, never wanted dexterity where danger was to be avoided (§ 63).

He ran about chattering and crying, asking advice and listening to none (§ 65).

Fox would certainly intermeddle with that department which the duke was most desirous to reserve entire to himself, the jobbing department (§ 80).

Such is Macaulay's method of portraiture. He uses vivid colours, and neglects half-tones. Some few characteristics are selected and insisted on; qualifying elements are omitted. To the subject himself such a method is in most cases unfair, but to the reader it is an undoubted saving of mental effort. "He goes on blacking the chimney", says Mr. Leslie Stephen, "with a pers stency which somehow amuses us because he puts so much heart into his work."

Almost any paragraph of Macaulay's would furnish proof that one of his commonest devices for impressing the reader consists in his choice of adjectives. They are nearly always of a forcible kind, and are often rendered still more forcible by being put in the superlative degree. The following is a list of the adjectives which occur in a paragraph selected well-nigh at random (§ 5): 'very extraordinary', 'strong', 'quick', 'vehement', 'grand', 'beautiful', 'low and dirty', 'sordid', 'fierce', 'short', 'direct', 'public', 'quite fair', 'most scrupulous', 'basest', 'most immoral', 'better', 'nobler', 'brave', 'splendid', 'possible', 'aristocratical', 'personal', 'middle', 'firm', 'unwilling', 'ample', 'great and durable', 'eminent'. There is little need to comment on this list, which sufficiently

illustrates Macaulay's predilection for vigorous epithets. It should be remembered, however, that the selected paragraph is far from being an extreme example of his manner.

This energy, not to say extravagance, of expression, which pervades all Macaulay's work, leads him at times to indulge in phrases that are somewhat wanting in dignity. George I loves "nothing but punch and fat women"; when Walpole and Townshend quarrel, "the women squall"; when Pitt is not invited to take office under Wilmington, he "sticks firmly to his old trade of patriot"; in India the English and the French are employed in "cutting each other's throats"; the king is "as sulky as possible"; the negotiations preliminary to the formation of a government are described as "haggling"; the statesmen of France are the "fops and intriguers of Versailles". However questionable in their taste such utterances may be, they at least keep the reader in a state of attention and exhibit the author's meaning with unmistakable plainness.

In the arrangement of his material Macaulay is excellent. He never allows the main theme to sink into insignificance, or subordinate details to usurp a place that is not their own. A glance at the *Synopsis* of the present Essay will suffice to show his merits in this respect. Nor is it only in his shorter productions that Macaulay deserves this praise. "The two volumes", writes Mr. J. C. Morison in reviewing the *History*, "which comprise the reign of James II, in spite of their abundant detail are as truly an organic whole as a sonnet. Though the canvas is crowded in every part with events and characters, there is no confusion, no obstruction to clear vision. Whenever we stand, we seem to be opposite to the centre of the picture. However interested we may be in a part, we are never allowed to lose sight of the whole."

Much of Macaulay's popularity is due to his selection of subjects. Avoiding names and periods not familiar to his readers, he chooses to glorify those distinguished characters whom the English people has long regarded with reverence



and affection. Milton among poets, Bacon, Bunyan, Addison, and Johnson among writers of prose, Burleigh, Hampden, Pitt, Clive, and Hastings among statesmen and warriors, honoured names, whose mere enumeration impresses us with the dignity of our race—these are the themes on which Macaulay rejoices to expatiate. And his treatment of such themes is well calculated to excite our national pride. But it is not to national pride alone that he makes his appeal; he stoops at times to pander to national prejudices, and even class prejudices.

But the state of the French government and of the French nation gave every advantage to Pitt. The fops and intriguers of Versailles were appalled and bewildered by his vigour. A panic spread through all ranks of society. Our enemies soon considered it as a settled thing that they were always to be beaten. Thus victory begot victory, till, at last, whenever the forces of the two nations met, they met with disdainful confidence on one side and with a craven fear on the other. The situation which Pitt occupied at the close of the reign of George the Second was the most enviable ever occupied by any public man in English history. . . . The Great Commoner, the name by which he was often designated, might look down with scorn on coronets and garters (§§ 94, 95).

Patriotic exultation in the triumphs of England under Pitt is here blended with contempt of the French and disdain of aristocratic distinctions, a compound very much to the liking of the average Briton.

Contempt, indeed, and very hearty contempt too, is freely indulged in by Macaulay. It is a part of his robust, outspoken disposition. With what gusto he holds up Newcastle to ridicule has already been shown; and Newcastle is not the only one who suffers in this Essay. The Tories are little more than rows of ponderous fox-hunters; George I loves nothing but punch and fat women; Thackeray, Gifford, Tomline, Dodington, Sandys, Tindal, Coxe, Lord Brougham, Orator Hunt, Sir Thomas Robinson, and even Pitt himself, come deservedly or undeservedly beneath the lash; and the flattered reader, as he sanctions and witnesses their castiga-

tion, seems to be discharging the duties of a righteous judge.

Macaulay held sharply-defined opinions, which were subject to but little variation during his mature life. At Cambridge he changed from Tory to Whig, and even before that time he had made his escape from the narrowing influences of the Clapham sect in which he was brought up. But, this metamorphosis once effected, he suffered an almost complete arrest of development. He was well assured of the correctness of the views which he had adopted in early manhood; he was content not to speculate; he laughed at philosophies that conferred no material benefits on mankind. Throughout this *Essay on Pitt* we discover no self-mistrust in the tone of his utterances, no suggestion of the deeper problems of human existence. Here, again, he commends himself to the average reader, who abhors speculation, and prefers an opinion delivered with an air of conviction to a conclusion reached by an exercise of the reasoning faculty. "He was the man of affairs," writes Mr. Frederic Harrison, "the busy politician, the rhetorician, the eulogist of society as it is, the believer in material progress, in the ultimate triumph of all that is practical and commonplace, and in the final discomfiture of all that is visionary and utopian." In much the same vein Mr. Morison says: "Eschewing high thought on the one hand, and deep feeling on the other, he marched down a middle road of resonant commonplace, quite certain that where

Bang, whang, whang, goes the drum,  
And tootle-tee-tootle the fife,

the densest crowd, marching in time, will follow the music".

Owing to his wide reading and retentive memory Macaulay is always able to brighten his pages with amusing or interesting detail. He hardly ever mentions a person, a place, or an event, even when they are of subordinate importance, without a touch of picturesque reminiscence. In this *Essay*, for instance, the South Sea Bubble might well have

been dismissed in a single sentence ; but Macaulay sees his opportunity for a brilliant word-picture, and with a few graphic strokes brings before us all the panic and excitement caused by that notorious venture. So, too, the salient characteristics of Carteret, Pulteney, Townshend, Argyle, and Chesterfield are indicated in a series of brief, but vivid, sketches. The Duke of Richelieu is described in a couple of caustic lines, and even Yonge and Winnington are made to emerge from their oblivion by the illumination of a phrase.

He abounds in illustrations and comparisons, introducing them on some occasions to render his meaning more transparent, on others to lend pomp and colour to his narrative. Of the first use we find an example in § 2 :

Almost every mechanical employment, it is said, has a tendency to injure some one or other of the bodily organs of the artisan. Grinders of cutlery die of consumption, weavers are stunted in their growth, smiths become blear-eyed. In the same manner almost every intellectual employment has a tendency to produce some intellectual malady. Biographers, translators, editors, all, in short, who employ themselves in illustrating the lives or the writings of others, are peculiarly exposed to the *Lues Boswelliana*, or the disease of admiration.

On the other hand, we feel that he is displaying his powers of allusion, when he tells us that Pitt's friends could not obtain admittance to his room

till the light was thrown with Rembrandt-like effect on the head of the illustrious performer, till the flannels had been arranged with the air of a Grecian drapery, and the crutch placed as gracefully as that of Belisarius or Lear.

Among allusions we may class his citation of proverbs and his imitation of familiar Bible phrases. In § 49 he quotes 'penny-wise and pound-foolish', and in § 80 he refers to the jealousy which is said to exist between two of a trade. In § 95 he tells us that a new generation of country squires and rectors had arisen who knew not the Stuarts, modelling his sentence on that of Stephen in the *Acts of the Apostles*, "another king arose which knew not Joseph". Even in

these small particulars the desire to keep close to the popular intelligence is made manifest.

One quality Macaulay has, which all men, learned or unlearned, must unite to admire, and that is his sterling common sense. In a question of practical right or wrong there are few better guides. His remarks on the punishment of Admiral Byng are at once generous to the victim, shrewd in their knowledge of human nature, and convincing in their effect on the reader.

It has been shown that Macaulay's style is essentially a popular style. We have the author's own testimony to prove that this popular quality is the outcome of deliberate intention. In a letter to Macvey Napier, who, as editor of the *Edinburgh Review*, had excised certain passages in one of Macaulay's articles, he says: "The passages omitted were the most pointed and ornamented sentences in the review. Now, for high and grave works—a history for example, or a system of political or moral philosophy—Doctor Johnson's rule, that every sentence which the writer thinks fine ought to be cut out, is excellent. But periodical works like ours, which, unless they strike at the first reading, are not likely to strike at all, whose whole life is a month or two, may, I think, be allowed to be sometimes even viciously florid. Probably, in estimating the real value of any tinsel which I may put upon my articles, you and I should not materially differ. But it is not by his own taste, but by the taste of the fish, that the angler is determined in his choice of bait." In another letter to Napier he asserts that "a bold, dashing, scene-painting manner is that which always succeeds best in periodical writing". Clearness he held to be a paramount virtue in a popular style. "How little the all-important art of making meaning pellucid is studied now! Hardly any popular writer, except myself, thinks of it. Many seem to aim at being obscure. Indeed, they may be right enough in one sense; for many readers give credit for profundity to whatever is obscure, and call all that is perspicuous shallow."

It is evident from these extracts that Macaulay knew what he was doing. Excessive emphasis, gorgeous colour, clear expression were the means that he consciously employed, and the result has shown that he formed a correct estimate of the public taste. It may be remarked, by the way, that most modern journalists of the higher class follow Macaulay's example to the best of their ability.

Macaulay's pre-eminent gift is the gift of story-telling. In this respect he has no equal, we might almost say no rival, among English historians. Even a somewhat unfriendly critic like Mr. Leslie Stephen admits to the full Macaulay's skill as a narrator. "The outlines may be harsh and the colours too glaring, but the general effect has been carefully studied. The details are wrought in with consummate skill. We indulge in an intercalary 'Pish!' here and there; but we are fascinated, and were member." He secures our interest from the first, and, in spite of his annoying tricks of style, he holds it to the end. He fires us with his enthusiasm for England; he speaks the word, and the centuries slide before us in panoramic scenes. The finest examples of his narrative power occur in the *History*. The descriptions of Charles II's death, of Monmouth's rebellion, and of James II's flight move rapidly on from point to point with ever-growing interest. Hardly inferior to these passages is the tale of the origin and progress of our Indian empire as set forth in the Essays on Clive and Hastings. Though the present Essay on Pitt cannot be ranked with such masterpieces as these, the reader must indeed be apathetic who does not feel a quickening of the pulses as he peruses the record of Pitt's great administration, and hears, as it were, the thunders of victory after victory breaking round him in rapid succession.

### 3. MACAULAY'S ESTIMATE OF PITT

Macaulay's Whig sympathies make themselves felt in this Essay. Because Somers was one of the founders of the Whig

party, Macaulay unjustly elevates him to a position by the side of a true patriot such as Hampden. Macaulay admired the younger Fox, and therefore he presents the character of the elder Fox in a more attractive aspect than it deserves. He admired Rockingham and Burke, and therefore he cannot wholly forgive Pitt for not joining forces with them in the latter part of his career. That Pitt was a sincere lover of his country, and that he roused the English people from despair to hopeful energy, he admits unreservedly, but at the same time he is not slow to point out his errors and weaknesses. He ridicules poetical claims which Pitt himself never advanced; he collects his inconsistencies in a series of violent contrasts; he dwells repeatedly on his stage-like affectations; he styles his opposition to Walpole "his old trade of patriot"; he rakes up an uncertain scandal concerning negotiations between Pitt and Walpole at the time of the latter's fall. Even the patriotism of Pitt is not allowed to be pure; it is based upon an ambitious desire for fame. It is, of course, the acknowledged duty of a historian to exhibit both sides of the picture, but when, as in this case, the historian takes an evident pleasure in exhibiting the dark side, we cannot wholly acquit him of prejudice.

It will not, then, be out of place to examine some of the charges brought against Pitt by Macaulay.

After summing up Pitt's inconsistencies Macaulay affects astonishment that Mr. Thackeray should consider Pitt, in spite of all his changes, as a virtuous and enlightened statesman. But consistency is not the necessary attendant of virtue and enlightenment. It would be an ill thing for the world if those who aspired to be good were obliged to continue unchanged in their opinions. Goodness and intellectual progress would then be dissociated. There was a time when Pitt clamoured against Walpole. There was a time, too, when he recognized the injustice of part, at least, of this clamour, and made public amends to the memory of the older statesman. "The more I reflect on my conduct, the more I

blame myself for opposing the Excise Bill", he said in the course of a speech in the House, and when some members laughed, he continued: "Let those who are ashamed to confess their errors laugh out. Can it be deemed adulation to praise a minister who is no more?" In this case inconsistency was wisdom, for English statesmen have since decided that Walpole's views on the Excise question were sound. Further, the open confession of this change of opinion was the most honourable line of action that Pitt could have adopted.

Pitt declaimed against the right of search, and yet consented to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle, in which the right of search was tacitly admitted. Such is Macaulay's charge. Its truth must be conceded, but Pitt is not disgraced by the concession. The right of search belonged to Spain by the law of nations, and had been recognized in the treaty of Utrecht. Pitt's youthful fervour certainly carried him in a wrong direction when it led him to oppose this right; but when he silently acknowledged the same right, he was ranking himself on the side of the established law. In this matter, then, as in the question of Excise, we are entitled to plead that growing years brought increasing wisdom to Pitt's mind. "I was then very young and sanguine", he said in reference to his early tirades against the right of search. "I am now ten years older, and have had time to consider things more coolly." Other reasons, no doubt, operated to restrain Pitt from offering any opposition to the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. All the parties to the war were temporarily exhausted, and the desire for peace was general. Our Protestant ally, Holland, was at the mercy of France, and a prolongation of hostilities would have effected her ruin. It was unnatural, too, that another Protestant power, Russia, should be leagued with the Catholics of France and Spain against us. Under these circumstances an inconclusive treaty was patched up, in which not only the right of search, but many other matters of old debate, were left unsettled.

Concerning subsidies Pitt laid down an excellent general rule when he said that "regard ought to be had to Hanover if it should be attacked on our account; but we could not find money to defend it by subsidies, and, if we could, that is not the way to defend it". Pitt meant, of course, that the interests of Great Britain should be protected by soldiers of her own breeding, not by mercenary forces. With this object he dismissed the Hessian troops that had been brought into England by Newcastle, reorganized the national militia, and formed the disaffected Highlanders into regiments of the line for service abroad. Unfortunately this wise policy had not time to develop substantial results before England was in the throes of the Seven Years' War. With scarcely any soldiers or sailors we stood face to face with our Continental opponents, of whom one, France, had an army of no fewer than 200,000 men. Hanover was already in the hands of the enemy. At this juncture Pitt began to pay a yearly subsidy of £670,000 to Frederick of Prussia. The inconsistency is obvious, but it was justified by results. Hanover was recovered, and Frederick, assisted by Prince Ferdinand, kept the French so busily employed that Pitt was able to devote himself to building up the naval power by which the Colonial Empire of France was ultimately shattered to pieces. The Right Hon. W. H. Massey, himself a politician as well as a historian, has some pertinent observations on the Subsidy question in his *History of England* (vol. i, p. 68): "Nor was Pitt to be deterred by any idle charges of inconsistency from availing himself of every means for the successful prosecution of the war. His early parliamentary fame had been chiefly acquired by denunciations against the mode of carrying on war by subsidizing petty military states; but the practice so reprobated was a gross abuse of a system which, under appropriate circumstances, might be highly recommended to a war minister. For England to take into her pay a petty chieftain who might or might not bring into the field his contingent of all-appointed troops was one thing; to aid a great military



monarch, of consummate ability, and already in the field at the head of a splendid army was another. There could be no just comparison between the waste of a hundred thousand pounds upon the Elector of Hesse and the grant of half a million to the King of Prussia. The Great Commoner had well and wisely denounced Hanoverian wars for the sake of Hanover: but, when England was to be attacked through the side of Hanover, he as well and wisely declared that the protection of Hanover should be as dear to this country as that of Hampshire."

We come now to the remaining inconsistency alleged against Pitt by Macaulay, namely, that after leaving Newcastle he consented to coalesce with him. A little consideration will show that this change of attitude was wholly creditable to Pitt. With admirable clearness Macaulay has unfolded the political reasons which induced Pitt to join forces with a man who was corrupt, deceitful, cowardly, and incompetent, but who was nevertheless in a position to upset any rival government. Macaulay, however, does not go beyond these political reasons. He does not point out that in taking office together with the detested Newcastle Pitt was animated by a noble patriotism. Pitt, when he left the duke in 1755, was no more than a prominent politician, but, when he rejoined the duke in 1757, he was the idol of the people, the one statesman supported by the whole middle-class of England. He was himself well aware of his power, and if he could have used it without combining with Newcastle, he would have done so. But this, as Macaulay has explained, was impossible. So Pitt threw consistency to the winds, and stooped to an alliance with the duke, because by that alliance he secured the opportunity of utilizing his immense popularity for the regeneration and salvation of his country. We grant that Pitt was inconsistent; we grant that, had he been thus inconsistent for objects of private ambition only, he would not have deserved any defence. But when we reflect that he was inconsistent with a lofty purpose, and

risked his own honour at the bar of posterity in order to save the honour of his country, we feel that we owe him our deepest gratitude. It appears, then, that the inconsistencies with which Macaulay taxes Pitt fall into two classes: first, those which involve a change from a wrong to a right attitude of mind; and secondly, those which involve a temporary sacrifice of conviction to the interests of his country. In the first case we must admire Pitt for having the courage to renounce his errors. In the second case his conduct is justified by its happy consequences to England.

In criticising Pitt as a war minister, Macaulay remarks on the absence of profound or dexterous combination in his arrangements, and states that several of his expeditions, particularly those sent to the coast of France, were at once costly and absurd. There is no denying this. The American campaign of 1759, for instance, was certainly ill-planned. Three armies were to converge on Quebec. One army, under Wolfe, arrived at the point of concentration in June. The others did not make their appearance within the year, and Quebec was captured without their assistance. The affair of St. Cas, which Macaulay passes over in silence, was a melancholy piece of folly. An English force, having landed on French soil, wandered aimlessly about for several days, apparently not knowing what to do. On the approach of some French troops they made for their ships, and were shot down or taken prisoners by the hundred in their attempt to re-embark. But, while Macaulay has not expatiated on the absurdities of the French expeditions with the detail which one would have expected, he has entirely overlooked their importance in Pitt's general plan of attack upon the French power. To quote Massey once more: "The expeditions to St. Malo and Rochefort have been censured, as if their object had been incommensurate with their vast expense; but, in fact, these adventures formed part of an extensive scheme of operations, the principle of which was to distract the attention and divide the resources of the

enemy". It is well, too, to remember that these expeditions had the approval of so great a master of war as Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, and that during their progress he was able to recover Hanover.

Not only does Macaulay underrate the value of these small expeditions, but he fails to impress upon us the preponderating influence of English sea power in Pitt's successes. Though our sailors were few at the beginning of the Seven Years' War, our ships outnumbered the united navies of France and Spain. Pitt saw this advantage, and strained every nerve to man the ships and send them out to sea, in order that he might strike at the French possessions in all quarters of the world, and prevent the despatch of auxiliaries. The extent of his naval designs will be seen from the following summary, which is based upon Captain Mahan's fuller account in his *Influence of Sea Power upon History*.

1. In North America, military operations, supported by English fleets, were carried on against Louisburg, Quebec, and Montreal.

2. The French Atlantic ports, especially Brest, were watched in force, so as to keep the great fleets or small squadrons from getting out without fighting.

3. Attacks were made upon the Atlantic and Channel coasts with flying squadrons, followed at times by the descent of small bodies of troops.

4. A fleet was kept in the Mediterranean, and near Gibraltar, to prevent the French Toulon fleet from getting round to the Atlantic.

5. Distant foreign expeditions were sent against the French colonies in the West India Islands and on the coast of Africa, and a squadron was maintained in the East Indies to secure the control of those seas, thereby supporting the English in India, and cutting off the communications of the French.

Macaulay enumerates most of the successes which were the outcome of this world-wide energy, but he does not

demonstrate that, whether won on land or sea, they were alike due to the navy. He does not show that by our ships French commerce was destroyed and the French nation gradually stripped of the means of carrying on war, while English trade was protected and the English exchequer kept well filled. Nor does Macaulay tell us that even when Pitt had retired from office, his naval policy was still pursued, and by its means Spain was humbled no less than France had been. "England", says a French historian of the Seven Years' War, "had conquered solely by the superiority of her government." "Yes," replies Captain Mahan, "but by the superiority of her government using the tremendous weapon of her sea power. This made her rich, and in turn protected the trade by which she had her wealth. With her money she upheld her few auxiliaries, namely Prussia and Hanover, in their desperate strife. Her power was everywhere that her ships could reach, and there was none to dispute the sea to her. Where she would she went, and with her went her guns and her troops. By this mobility her forces were multiplied, those of her enemies distracted. Ruler of the sea, she everywhere obstructed its highways. The enemies' fleets could not join; no great fleet could get out, or, if it did, it was only to meet at once, with uninured officers and crews, those who were veterans in gales and warfare."

Macaulay is so much occupied in giving a detailed presentment of Pitt and his contemporaries, he traces with such minute care the fortunes of individual politicians and the rise and fall of political combinations, that he fails to dwell with due insistence on the real issues at stake in Pitt's time. Yet he must have known what those issues were. He must have known that the struggle of the century was the struggle for colonial expansion, that France and England were the chief competitors, and that India and America were the prizes set for the reward of the victor. Nevertheless he does not make us realize this as he makes us realize the

extravagance of Pitt's attire or the absurdities of Newcastle's distress. We are transported to the age of George II, and see the world as our forefathers saw it. The actors on that busy stage pass backward and forward with life-like animation; they plot, they counterplot, they triumph, they fail; but the mighty event to which their actions are inevitably tending is clouded over, and lacks the light which an added century of experience has placed at our service.

Professor Seeley in his *Expansion of England* has protested against this method of writing history, especially in relation to eighteenth-century England. "It is only our own blindness and perversity", he says, "which leads us to overlook the grandeur of that phase of our history, while we fix our eyes upon petty domestic occurrences, parliamentary quarrels, party intrigue, and court gossip." In the wars which were waged between England and France from 1740 to 1783, the war of the Austrian Succession, the Seven Years' War, and the American War, he sees a trilogy of wars, having a single great object and result, the sovereignty of the New World, and supplying just the grand feature which that time seems so sadly to want. "In the first of these wars the issue is fairly joined; in the second France suffers her fatal fall; in the third she takes her signal revenge. This is the grand chapter in the history of Greater Britain, for it is the first great struggle in which the Empire fights as a whole, the colonies and settlements outside Europe being here not merely dragged in the wake of the mother-country, but actually taking the lead. We ought to register this event with a very broad mark in our calendar of the eighteenth century. The principal and most decisive incidents of it belong to the latter half of the reign of George II."

## BOOKS OF REFERENCE

All the following books are easily procurable, and some of them should be consulted by the student. The books in the first group relate to Pitt, those in the second group to Macaulay.

I. GREEN, J. R.: *Short History of the English People.*

LECKY, W. E. H.: *History of England in the Eighteenth Century.*

SEELEY, J. R.: *Expansion of England.*

WALPOLE, H.: *Memoirs of the Reign of George II.*

II. HARRISON, F.: *Studies in Early Victorian Literature.*

MINTO, W.: *Manual of English Prose Literature.*

MORISON, J. C.: *Macaulay* (English Men of Letters Series).

STEPHEN, LESLIE: *Hours in a Library* (vol. ii).

TREVELYAN, G. O.: *Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay.*

## SYNOPSIS OF THE ESSAY

- A. *General reflections occasioned by the perusal of Thackeray's "History of Pitt"*.  
Chief features of Thackeray's book (1).  
Its most conspicuous fault—*lues Boswelliana*: Pitt regarded as the just man made perfect (2, 3).  
But Pitt, though undoubtedly great, was inconsistent and theatrical (4).  
The nature of Pitt's greatness (5).
- B. *Biographical details of Pitt*.  
History of the Pitt family (6).  
Education of Pitt (7, 8).  
A cornet in the Blues (9).  
Enters Parliament as member for Old Sarum, while Walpole is still at the head of affairs (10).
- C. *Description of the Whig Opposition to which Pitt attached himself*.  
Walpole's rise to power at the time of the South Sea Bubble (11).  
Walpole drives his Whig associates into Opposition by his love of power (12).  
Pulteney becomes leader of the Opposition (13).  
Carteret joins the Opposition (14).  
Townshend retires from political life (15).  
Chesterfield and others are dismissed from office by Walpole (16).  
Argyle joins the Opposition (17).  
Characteristics of Walpole's remaining supporters (18).  
Tory opponents of Walpole described (19).  
Pitt joins the Patriots, or Whigs in Opposition (20).  
Frederic, Prince of Wales, favours the Patriots, and so founds the Leicester House Party (21).  
Reasons that move a prince to join the Opposition (22).  
Frederic's political position advantageous to (a) Royal Family, (b) discontented Whigs, (c) Tories (23).
- D. *Pitt as an orator*.  
Frederic's marriage (24).  
This marriage the occasion of Pitt's maiden speech. Macaulay's criticism of Tindal's eulogy (25).  
Pitt's fluency and personal advantages arrest attention from the first (26).  
An orator's reputation in the last century largely dependent on personal advantages. These Pitt both possessed and cultivated (27).

But apart from such advantages Pitt was a great orator (28).  
 Not a speaker of set speeches (29).  
 Not a great debater like Charles Fox (30).  
 He spoke not to answer others, but to declare his own thoughts (31).  
 Sources of his influence as an orator—sincerity, moral elevation, passionate enthusiasm (32).

**E. *Pitt's Parliamentary career before taking office.***

Pitt dismissed from the Army by Walpole. Thackeray wrong in supposing that Walpole dismissed Pitt because he could not bribe him (33).  
 Pitt Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales. Clamours for war with Spain. Thackeray wrong in admiring him for this (34).  
 Walpole resigns. Pitt and the younger patriots make overtures to him. This incident overlooked by Thackeray (35).  
 Wilmington's ministry. Pitt, who has no place given him, now urges the prosecution of Walpole. Bill of indemnity (36).  
 Pitt attacks Carteret, the chief figure in Wilmington's ministry. Denounces Hanoverian connection (37).  
 Pitt receives £10,000 under Duchess of Marlborough's will (38).  
 Pitt regarded with favour by the Pelhams, who have become supreme since the death of Wilmington and the retirement of Carteret, but disliked by the king on account of his speeches against the Hanoverian connection (39).  
 Pitt forced on the king by the Pelhams (40).

**F. *Pitt's early official career under Henry Pelham.***

Pitt Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and somewhat later Paymaster of the Forces (41).  
 Refuses to accept the perquisites of his office (42).  
 This disinterestedness wins him the admiration of the public (43).  
 Pitt acquiesces in the Hanoverian connection and the Right of Search. Eight quiet years of office (44).  
 Pitt compared with Murray and Fox; intellectually on a level with them, he was their superior in moral qualities (45, 46).  
 Death of Henry Pelham (47).

**G. *Pitt's rapid rise to a supreme position.***

Newcastle succeeds his brother as Prime Minister. A leader of the Commons wanted (48).  
 The kind of leader desired by Newcastle (49).  
 Newcastle offers the leadership to Henry Fox (50).  
 Fox refuses Newcastle's terms, and Sir Thomas Robinson is appointed (51).  
 Pitt and Fox combine to annoy Sir Thomas (52).  
 Signs of a coming struggle between England and France. Troubles in India and America (53).  
 Newcastle draws Fox from his alliance with Pitt by giving him a seat in the Cabinet (54).  
 Preparations for war with France. Bad news from America (55).  
 Subsidiary treaties for the protection of Hanover (56).



Pitt refuses to support the subsidies. Fox becomes Secretary of State and leader of the Commons in the place of Sir Thomas Robinson (57).  
 Pitt and Legge dismissed by Newcastle for opposing the subsidies (58).  
 Growing reputation of Pitt (59).  
 Beginning of war; Byng's failure at Minorca; national excitement concerning mismanagement of war (60).  
 National despondency reflected in Brown's *Estimate* (61).  
 Newcastle becomes afraid (62).  
 Deserted by Fox, Newcastle makes overtures to Murray (63).  
 The king approaches Pitt, who demands Newcastle's exclusion from any new arrangement (64).  
 Newcastle resigns in despair (65).  
 The king asks Fox to form a government with Pitt, but the latter refuses to act with Fox (66).  
 Duke of Devonshire forms a ministry. Pitt is Secretary of State with real power (67).  
 The new ministry weak owing to its want of borough-interest; even Pitt finds difficulty in securing a seat (68).  
 Byng's execution. Macaulay's comment upon it (69).  
 Pitt pleads for Byng; the king's answer (70).  
 The king's dislike of Pitt and Temple (71).  
 Fall of the Devonshire government. Pitt the favourite of the people (72).

#### H. *Movements of Pitt and Newcastle towards a coalition.*

Pitt's moderation towards the Newcastle ministry when an enquiry into their misconduct of the war is held (73).  
 Reason for Pitt's moderation—though supported by the people, he could not stand against Newcastle's parliamentary interest (74).  
 Pitt loved his country, and wished to be in power so as to save it (75).  
 To be in power he saw that he must combine with Newcastle (76).  
 Newcastle on his part saw that his own position would be strengthened by an alliance with the favourite of the people (77).  
 Thus each was necessary to the other (78).  
 Under these circumstances Pitt behaved leniently towards Newcastle during the parliamentary enquiry (79).  
 The reason why Newcastle would not combine with Fox, viz. the unpopularity of the latter (80).  
 Eleven weeks without a ministry. The king still unwilling to accept Pitt (81).  
 At length the king gives way, and the Newcastle-Pitt administration is formed (82).

#### I. *Pitt as War Minister during the Seven Years' War.*

The new ministry. Newcastle, First Lord of the Treasury; Pitt, leader of the House and Secretary of State, with supreme direction of the war and foreign affairs; Fox, Paymaster (83).  
 The war prosecuted with vigour; naval victories; Louisburg taken, and Cape Breton reduced (84).

Capture of Quebec; naval victories off Lagos and in Quiberon Bay (85, 86).

Subjugation of Canada (87).

Successes of Clive in Bengal, and of Coote in the Carnatic; English supreme in India (88).

War on the Continent; subsidy of £670,000 to King of Prussia; Ferdinand of Brunswick victorious at Creveld and Minden (89, 90).

Commercial prosperity a result of our successes (91).

Macaulay criticises Pitt as a War-Minister:—(a) Some of his conquests splendid rather than useful; (b) his expenditure lavish; (c) several expeditions absurdly planned; (d) his energy, determination, and patriotic ardour worthy of all praise (92, 93, 94).

Pitt at the summit of his power (95).

Melancholy contrast between this glorious period and the disastrous period which soon followed (96).

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE

### 1702-1710. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF GODOLPHIN AND MARLBOROUGH.

1704. Marlborough defeats French at Blenheim.

1706. Marlborough defeats French at Ramillies.

1708. Sir Robert Walpole Secretary at War.

*Birth of William Pitt.*

Marlborough defeats French at Oudenarde.

General Stanhope takes Minorca.

1709. Marlborough defeats French at Malplaquet.

### 1710-1714. TORY ADMINISTRATION OF HARLEY AND ST. JOHN.

1711. Duke and Duchess of Marlborough dismissed from their offices.

Sir Robert Walpole accused by Tories of corruption and sent to the Tower.

1713. Treaty of Utrecht, restricting English trade with Spanish America, and allowing right of search.

1714. Death of Anne: accession of George I.

### 1714-1717. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF TOWNSHEND, STANHOPE, AND WALPOLE.

1715. Rebellion of the old Pretender.

1717. Townshend, Walpole, and Pulteney forced to resign.

### 1717-1721. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF STANHOPE AND SUNDERLAND.

1718. Sunderland becomes the real head of the Government.

1720. Walpole (Paymaster) and Townshend take office.

1720-1721. South Sea Bubble.

1721. Walpole restores public credit.

Death of Stanhope and Craggs; Sunderland has to resign; Aislabie expelled from the House.

### 1721-1742. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF SIR ROBERT WALPOLE.

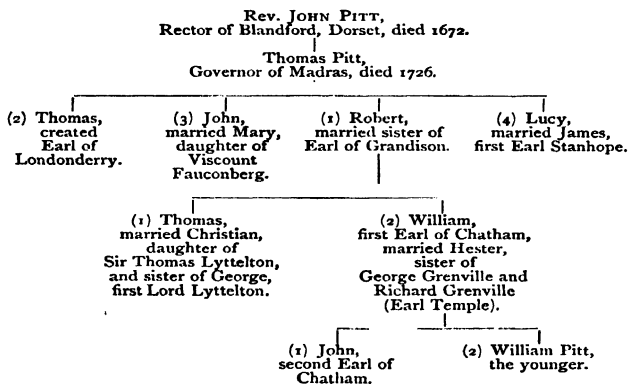
1724. Carteret banished to Ireland as Lord-Lieutenant for opposing Walpole.

1724. Henry Pelham Secretary at War.  
Duke of Newcastle Secretary of State.
1725. Pulteney goes into Opposition.
1726. *Pitt enters Trinity College, Oxford.*
- 1726-1736. Publication of *Craftsman* by Bolingbroke and Pulteney.
1727. Death of George I; accession of George II.
1730. *Pitt a cornet in the Blues.*  
Townshend quarrels with Walpole and retires from public life.
1731. Carteret goes into Opposition.
1733. Failure of Walpole's Excise Scheme.  
Chesterfield dismissed for opposing this measure.
1735. *Pitt enters Parliament as Member for Old Sarum.*
1736. *Pitt's maiden speech.*  
*Pitt dismissed from the army by Walpole.*
1737. *Pitt joins the Patriots, or Leicester House Party, patronized by Prince Frederic of Wales.*
1739. *Pitt urges war with Spain, and denounces Right of Search.*  
Walpole yields to popular clamour, and declares war with Spain.
1740. Argyle goes into Opposition.
1742. Walpole resigns.
- 1742-1743. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF WILMINGTON.  
Carteret the real head of the Government.  
Henry Pelham, Paymaster.  
Duke of Newcastle, Secretary of State.  
Pulteney and Walpole retire to the House of Lords.  
*Pitt calls for an enquiry into Walpole's conduct.*  
*Pitt denounces subsidies and Hanoverian connection.*
- 1743-1748. England joins in the war of the Austrian Succession;  
England and Austria against France, Spain, and Prussia.  
Battle of Dettingen.
- 1743-1754. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF HENRY PELHAM (BROAD BOTTOM ADMINISTRATION).  
1744. *Pitt moderates his anti-Hanoverian tone.*
1745. English defeated by French at Fontenoy.
- 1745-1746. Rebellion of the young Pretender.
1746. *Pitt becomes Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and shortly afterwards Paymaster.*

1746. Henry Fox, Secretary at War.  
Madras surrenders to the French.
1747. English under Duke of Cumberland defeated at Lauffeld.
1748. Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, ending war of Austrian Succession. All conquests to be restored on both sides; hence Madras ceded to English; Right of Search left unnoticed.
1751. Death of Frederick, Prince of Wales.  
Defence of Arcot by Clive.
1752. Trichinopoly yields to Lawrence and Clive.
- 1754-1756. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF DUKE OF NEWCASTLE.  
*Pitt continues as Paymaster, Fox as Secretary at War.*
1755. *Fox deserts Pitt, and becomes Secretary of State.*  
*Pitt and Legge dismissed for not supporting subsidiary treaties.*  
Braddock defeated in attempting to take Fort Duquesne, a French fort in the Ohio Valley.
- 1756-1763. Seven Years' War; England and Prussia against France, Austria, and Russia.
1756. Byng fails to relieve Minorca.  
Black Hole of Calcutta.  
Newcastle resigns.
- 1756-1757. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF DEVONSHIRE AND PITT.  
*Pitt Secretary of State with chief power.*
1757. Execution of Byng.  
Chandernagore surrenders to Clive.  
*Pitt and Devonshire dismissed by the King.*  
Clive wins battle of Plassey; English supreme in Northern India.
- 1757-1762. WHIG ADMINISTRATION OF NEWCASTLE AND PITT.  
*Pitt Secretary of State with chief power.*  
Duke of Cumberland capitulates at Klosterseven.  
Expedition against Aix and Rochefort on French coast.
1758. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick, having been appointed Commander-in-Chief of British and Hanoverian forces, wins battle of Crevelt.  
Annual subsidy of £670,000 granted to Prussia.  
Expedition against St. Malo and Cherbourg on French coast.

1758. Louisburg, capital of Cape Breton, surrenders to English.  
Fort Duquesne taken by English.
1759. Prince Ferdinand with British and Hanoverians defeats  
French at Minden.  
Goree captured.  
Guadeloupe captured.  
Forts of Ticonderoga and Niagara taken; Quebec won  
by Wolfe after battle on the Heights of Abraham.  
Boscawen's victory off Cape Lagos.  
Hawke's victory in Quiberon Bay.
1760. Coote defeats French at Wandewash; English supreme  
in Southern India.  
Montreal surrenders, and Canada is secured to English.  
Death of George II; accession of George III.
1761. *Pitt resigns because his colleagues will not declare war  
with Spain.*
1762. War with Spain.
1763. Peace of Paris, ending the Seven Years' War. England  
retains her conquests.

## PEDIGREE OF THE PITT FAMILY



# ESSAY ON WILLIAM PITT,

## EARL OF CHATHAM.

*A History of the Right Honourable William Pitt, Earl of Chatham, containing his Speeches in Parliament, a considerable Portion of his Correspondence when Secretary of State, upon French, Spanish, and American Affairs, never before published; and an Account of the principal Events and Persons of his Time, connected with his Life, Sentiments, and Administration.* By the REV. FRANCIS THACKERAY, A.M., 2 vols. 4to. London: 1827.

§ 1. THOUGH several years have elapsed since the publication of this work, it is still, we believe, a new publication to most of our readers. Nor are we surprised at this. The book is large, and the style heavy. The information which Mr. Thackeray has obtained from the State Paper Office is new; but much of it is very uninteresting. The rest of his narrative is very little better than Gifford's or Tomline's Life of the second Pitt, and tells us little or nothing that may not be found quite as well told in the Parliamentary History, the Annual Register, and other works equally common. 10

§ 2. Almost every mechanical employment, it is said, has a tendency to injure some one or other of the bodily organs of the artisan. Grinders of cutlery die of consumption; weavers are stunted in their growth; smiths become blear-eyed. In the same manner almost every intellectual employment has a tendency to produce some intellectual malady. Biographers,



- 1 translators, editors, all, in short, who employ themselves in illustrating the lives or the writings of others, are peculiarly exposed to the *Lues Boswelliana*, or disease of admiration. But we scarcely remember ever to have seen a patient so far gone in this distemper as Mr. Thackeray. He is not satisfied with forcing us to confess that Pitt was a great orator, a vigorous minister, an honourable and high-spirited gentleman. He will have it that all virtues and all  
 10 accomplishments met in his hero. In spite of gods, men, and columns, Pitt must be a poet, a poet capable of producing a heroic poem of the first order; and we are assured that we ought to find many charms in such lines as these:—

“Midst all the tumults of the warring sphere,  
 My light-charged bark may haply *glide*;  
 Some gale may waft, some conscious thought shall cheer,  
 And the small freight unanxious *glide*”.<sup>1</sup>

- § 3. Pitt was in the army for a few months in time  
 20 of peace. Mr. Thackeray accordingly insists on our confessing that, if the young cornet had remained in the service, he would have been one of the ablest commanders that ever lived. But this is not all. Pitt, it seems, was not merely a great poet *in esse*, and a great general *in posse*, but a finished example of moral excellence, the just man made perfect. He was in the right when he attempted to establish an inquisition, and to give bounties for perjury, in order to get Walpole's head. He was in the right when he declared  
 30 Walpole to have been an excellent minister. He was in the right when, being in opposition, he maintained that no peace ought to be made with Spain, till she should formally renounce the right of search. He was

<sup>1</sup> The quotation is faithfully made from Mr. Thackeray. Perhaps Pitt wrote *guide* in the fourth line.

in the right when, being in office, he silently acquiesced 1  
in a treaty by which Spain did not renounce the right  
of search. When he left the Duke of Newcastle, when  
he coalesced with the Duke of Newcastle, when he  
thundered against subsidies, when he lavished subsidies  
with unexampled profusion, when he execrated the  
Hanoverian connection, when he declared that  
Hanover ought to be as dear to us as Hampshire, he  
was still invariably speaking the language of a virtuous  
and enlightened statesman. 10

§ 4. The truth is, that there scarcely ever lived a  
person who had so little claim to this sort of praise as  
Pitt. He was undoubtedly a great man. But his was ✓  
not a complete and well-proportioned greatness. The  
public life of Hampden or of Somers resembles a regular  
drama, which can be criticised as a whole, and every  
scene of which is to be viewed in connection with the  
main action. The public life of Pitt, on the other  
hand, is a rude though striking piece, a piece abound-  
ing in incongruities, a piece without any unity of plan, 20  
but redeemed by some noble passages, the effect of  
which is increased by the tameness or extravagance of  
what precedes and of what follows. His opinions  
were unfixed. His conduct at some of the most  
important conjunctures of his life was evidently  
determined by pride and resentment. He had one  
fault, which of all human faults is most rarely found  
in company with true greatness. He was extremely  
affected. He was an almost solitary instance of a man  
of real genius, and of a brave, lofty, and commanding 30  
spirit, without simplicity of character. He was an  
actor in the Closet, an actor at Council, an actor in  
Parliament; and even in private society he could not  
lay aside his theatrical tones and attitudes. We know  
that one of the most distinguished of his partisans

- 1 often complained that he could never obtain admittance to Lord Chatham's room till everything was ready for the representation, till the dresses and properties were all correctly disposed, till the light was thrown with Rembrandt-like effect on the head of the illustrious performer, till the flannels had been arranged with the air of a Grecian drapery, and the crutch placed as gracefully as that of Belisarius or Lear.

- § 5. Yet, with all his faults and affectations, Pitt  
10 had, in a very extraordinary degree, many of the elements of greatness. He had genius, strong passions, quick sensibility, and vehement enthusiasm for the grand and the beautiful. There was something about him which ennobled conversation itself. He often went wrong, very wrong. But, to quote the language of Wordsworth,

“He still retained,  
'Mid such abasement, what he had received  
From nature, an intense and glowing mind”.

- 20 In an age of low and dirty prostitution, in the age of Dodington and Sandys, it was something to have a man who might perhaps, under some strong excitement, have been tempted to ruin his country, but who never would have stooped to pilfer from her, a man whose errors arose, not from a sordid desire of gain, but from a fierce thirst for power, for glory, and for vengeance. History owes to him this attestation, that, at a time when any thing short of direct embezzlement of the public money was considered as quite fair in  
30 public men, he showed the most scrupulous disinterestedness; that, at a time when it seemed to be generally taken for granted that Government could be upheld only by the basest and most immoral arts, he appealed to the better and nobler parts of human nature; that he made a brave and splendid attempt

to do, by means of public opinion, what no other 1  
 statesman of his day thought it possible to do, except  
 by means of corruption; that he looked for support,  
 not, like the Pelhams, to a strong aristocratical con-  
 nection, not, like Bute, to the personal favour of the  
 sovereign, but to the middle class of Englishmen; that  
 he inspired that class with a firm confidence in his  
 integrity and ability; that, backed by them, he forced  
 an unwilling court and an unwilling oligarchy to admit  
 him to an ample share of power; and that he used his 10  
 power in such a manner as clearly proved him to have  
 sought it, not for the sake of profit or patronage, but  
 from a wish to establish for himself a great and durable  
 reputation by means of eminent services rendered to  
 the State.

§ 6. The family of Pitt was wealthy and respectable.  
 His grandfather was Governor of Madras, and brought  
 back from India that celebrated diamond which the  
 Regent Orleans, by the advice of Saint Simon, pur-  
 chased for upwards of two millions of livres, and which 20  
 is still considered as the most precious of the crown  
 jewels of France. Governor Pitt bought estates and  
 rotten boroughs, and sat in the House of Commons  
 for Old Sarum. His son Robert was at one time  
 member for Old Sarum, and at another for Oak-  
 hampton. Robert had two sons. Thomas, the elder,  
 inherited the estates and the parliamentary interest of  
 his father. The second was the celebrated William  
 Pitt.

§ 7. He was born in November, 1708. About the 30  
 early part of his life little more is known than that he  
 was educated at Eton, and that at seventeen he was  
 entered at Trinity College, Oxford. During the second  
 year of his residence at the University, George the  
 First died; and the event was, after the fashion of that

1 generation, celebrated by the Oxonians in many mid-  
 dling copies of verses. On this occasion Pitt published  
 some Latin lines, which Mr. Thackeray has preserved.  
 They prove that the young student had but a very  
 limited knowledge even of the mechanical part of his  
 art. All true Etonians will hear with concern that  
 their illustrious schoolfellow is guilty of making the  
 first syllable in *labenti* short.<sup>1</sup> The matter of the poem  
 is as worthless as that of any college exercise that was  
 10 ever written before or since. There is, of course,  
 much about Mars, Themis, Neptune, and Cocytus.  
 The Muses are earnestly entreated to weep over the  
 urn of Cæsar; for Cæsar, says the Poet, loved the  
 Muses; Cæsar, who could not read a line of Pope,  
 and who loved nothing but punch and fat women.

§ 8. Pitt had been, from his school-days, cruelly  
 tormented by the gout, and was advised to travel for  
 his health. He accordingly left Oxford without taking  
 a degree, and visited France and Italy. He returned,  
 20 however, without having received much benefit from  
 his excursion, and continued, till the close of his  
 life, to suffer most severely from his constitutional  
 malady.

§ 9. His father was now dead, and had left very  
 little to the younger children. It was necessary that  
 William should choose a profession. He decided for  
 the army, and a cornet's commission was procured for  
 him in the Blues.

§ 10. But, small as his fortune was, his family had  
 30 both the power and the inclination to serve him. At  
 the general election of 1734, his elder brother Thomas  
 was chosen both for Old Sarum and for Oakhampton.  
 When Parliament met in 1735, Thomas made his

<sup>1</sup> So Mr. Thackeray has printed the poem. But it may be charitably  
 hoped that Pitt wrote *labanti*.

election to serve for Oakhampton, and William was 1  
returned for Old Sarum.

§ 11. Walpole had now been, during fourteen years,  
at the head of affairs. He had risen to power under  
the most favourable circumstances. The whole of the  
Whig party, of that party which professed peculiar  
attachment to the principles of the Revolution, and  
which exclusively enjoyed the confidence of the reign-  
ing house, had been united in support of his  
administration. Happily for him, he had been out 10  
of office when the South Sea Act was passed; and  
though he does not appear to have foreseen all the  
consequences of that measure, he had strenuously  
opposed it, as he had opposed all the measures, good  
and bad, of Sunderland's administration. When the  
South-Sea Company were voting dividends of fifty per  
cent, when a hundred pounds of their stock was selling  
for eleven hundred pounds, when Threadneedle Street  
was daily crowded with the coaches of dukes and  
prelates, when divines and philosophers turned gam- 20  
blers, when a thousand kindred bubbles were daily  
blown into existence, the periwig-company, and the  
Spanish-jackass-company, and the quicksilver-fixation-  
company, Walpole's calm good sense preserved him  
from the general infatuation. He condemned the  
prevailing madness in public, and turned a con-  
siderable sum by taking advantage of it in private.  
When the crash came, when ten thousand families  
were reduced to beggary in a day, when the people, in  
the frenzy of their rage and despair, clamoured, not 30  
only against the lower agents in the juggle, but against  
the Hanoverian favourites, against the English min-  
isters, against the King himself, when Parliament met,  
eager for confiscation and blood, when members of  
the House of Commons proposed that the directors

- 1 should be treated like parricides in ancient Rome, tied up in sacks and thrown into the Thames, Walpole was the man on whom all parties turned their eyes. Four years before, he had been driven from power by the intrigues of Sunderland and Stanhope, and the lead in the House of Commons had been entrusted to Craggs and Aislabie. Stanhope was no more. Aislabie was expelled from Parliament on account of his disgraceful conduct regarding the South-Sea scheme.
- 10 Craggs was perhaps saved by a timely death from a similar mark of infamy. A large minority in the House of Commons voted for a severe censure on Sunderland, who, finding it impossible to withstand the force of the prevailing sentiment, retired from office, and outlived his retirement but a very short time. The schism which had divided the Whig party was now completely healed. Walpole had no opposition to encounter except that of the Tories; and the Tories were naturally regarded by the King with the
- 20 strongest suspicion and dislike.

§ 12. For a time business went on with a smoothness and a despatch such as had not been known since the days of the Tudors. During the session of 1724, for example, there was hardly a single division except on private bills. It is not impossible that, by taking the course which Pelham afterwards took, by admitting into the Government all the rising talents and ambition of the Whig party, and by making room here and there for a Tory not unfriendly to the House

30 of Brunswick, Walpole might have averted the tremendous conflict in which he passed the later years of his administration, and in which he was at length vanquished. The Opposition which overthrew him was an Opposition created by his own policy, by his own insatiable love of power.

§ 13. In the very act of forming his Ministry he 1  
turned one of the ablest and most attached of his  
supporters into a deadly enemy. Pulteney had strong  
public and private claims to a high situation in the new  
arrangement. His fortune was immense. His private  
character was respectable. He was already a dis-  
tinguished speaker. He had acquired official ex-  
perience in an important post. He had been, through  
all changes of fortune, a consistent Whig. When the  
Whig party was split into two sections, Pulteney had 10  
resigned a valuable place, and had followed the for-  
tunes of Walpole. Yet, when Walpole returned to  
power, Pulteney was not invited to take office. An  
angry discussion took place between the friends. The  
Ministry offered a peerage. It was impossible for  
Pulteney not to discern the motive of such an offer.  
He indignantly refused to accept it. For some time he  
continued to brood over his wrongs, and to watch for  
an opportunity of revenge. As soon as a favourable  
conjuncture arrived he joined the minority, and became 20  
the greatest leader of Opposition that the House of  
Commons had ever seen.

§ 14. Of all the members of the Cabinet, Carteret  
was the most eloquent and accomplished. His talents  
for debate were of the first order; his knowledge of  
foreign affairs was superior to that of any living states-  
man; his attachment to the Protestant succession was  
undoubted. But there was not room in one Govern-  
ment for him and Walpole. Carteret retired, and  
was, from that time forward, one of the most per- 30  
severing and formidable enemies of his old colleague.

§ 15. If there was any man with whom Walpole  
could have consented to make a partition of power,  
that man was Lord Townshend. They were distant  
kinsmen by birth, near kinsmen by marriage. They



- 1 had been friends from childhood. They had been schoolfellows at Eton. They were country neighbours in Norfolk. They had been in office together under Godolphin. They had gone into opposition together when Harley rose to power. They had been persecuted by the same House of Commons. They had, after the death of Anne, been recalled together to office. They had again been driven out together by Sunderland, and had again come back together
- 10 when the influence of Sunderland had declined. Their opinions on public affairs almost always coincided. They were both men of frank, generous, and compassionate natures. Their intercourse had been for many years affectionate and cordial. But the ties of blood, of marriage, and of friendship, the memory of mutual services, the memory of common triumphs and common disasters, were insufficient to restrain that ambition which domineered over all the virtues and vices of Walpole. He was resolved, to use his own
- 20 metaphor, that the firm of the house should be, not Townshend and Walpole, but Walpole and Townshend. At length the rivals proceeded to personal abuse before a large company, seized each other by the collar, and grasped their swords. The women squalled. The men parted the combatants. By friendly intervention the scandal of a duel between cousins, brothers-in-law, old friends, and old colleagues, was prevented. But the disputants could not long continue to act together. Townshend retired, and,
- 30 with rare moderation and public spirit, refused to take any part in politics. He could not, he said, trust his temper. He feared that the recollection of his private wrongs might impel him to follow the example of Pulteney, and to oppose measures which he thought generally beneficial to the country. He therefore

never visited London after his resignation, but passed 1  
the closing years of his life in dignity and repose  
among his trees and pictures at Rainham.

§ 16. Next went Chesterfield. He too was a Whig  
and a friend of the Protestant succession. He was an  
orator, a courtier, a wit, and a man of letters. He  
was at the head of *ton* in days when, in order to be at  
the head of *ton*, it was not sufficient to be dull and  
supercilious. It was evident that he submitted im-  
patiently to the ascendancy of Walpole. He mur- 10  
mured against the Excise Bill. His brothers voted  
against it in the House of Commons. The Minister  
acted with characteristic caution and characteristic  
energy; caution in the conduct of public affairs;  
energy where his own supremacy was concerned. He  
withdrew his Bill, and turned out all his hostile or  
wavering colleagues. Chesterfield was stopped on the  
great staircase of St. James's, and summoned to deliver  
up the staff which he bore as Lord Steward of the  
Household. A crowd of noble and powerful func- 20  
tionaries, the Dukes of Montrose and Bolton, Lord  
Burlington, Lord Stair, Lord Cobham, Lord March-  
mont, Lord Clinton, were at the same time dismissed  
from the service of the Crown.

§ 17. Not long after these events the Opposition  
was reinforced by the Duke of Argyle, a man vain-  
glorious indeed and fickle, but brave, eloquent, and  
popular. It was in a great measure owing to his  
exertions that the Act of Settlement had been peace-  
ably carried into effect in England immediately after 30  
the death of Anne, and that the Jacobite rebellion  
which, during the following year, broke out in Scot-  
land, had been suppressed. He too carried over to  
the minority the aid of his great name, his talents,  
and his paramount influence in his native country.

1 § 18. In each of these cases taken separately, a skilful defender of Walpole might perhaps make out a case for him. But when we see that during a long course of years all the footsteps are turned the same way, that all the most eminent of those public men who agreed with the Minister in their general views of policy left him, one after another, with sore and irritated minds, we find it impossible not to believe that the real explanation of the phenomenon is to be found  
10 in the words of his son, "Sir Robert Walpole loved power so much that he would not endure a rival". Hume has described this famous minister with great felicity in one short sentence,—“moderate in exercising power, not equitable in engrossing it”. Kind-hearted, jovial, and placable as Walpole was, he was yet a man with whom no person of high pretensions and high spirit could long continue to act. He had, therefore, to stand against an Opposition containing all the most accomplished statesmen of the age, with  
20 no better support than that which he received from persons like his brother Horace or Henry Pelham, whose industrious mediocrity gave no cause for jealousy; or from clever adventurers, whose situation and character diminished the dread which their talents might have inspired. To this last class belonged Fox, who was too poor to live without office; Sir William Yonge, of whom Walpole himself said, that nothing but such parts could buoy up such a character, and that nothing but such a character could drag down  
30 such parts; and Winnington, whose private morals lay, justly or unjustly, under imputations of the worst kind.

§ 19. The discontented Whigs were, not perhaps in number, but certainly in ability, experience, and weight, by far the most important part of the Opposi-

tion. The Tories furnished little more than rows of 1  
ponderous fox-hunters, fat with Staffordshire or Devon-  
shire ale; men who drank to the King over the water,  
and believed that all the fund-holders were Jews; men  
whose religion consisted in hating the Dissenters, and  
whose political researches had led them to fear, like  
Squire Western, that their land might be sent over to  
Hanover to be put in the sinking-fund. The eloquence  
of these zealous squires, the remnant of the once for-  
midable October Club, seldom went beyond a hearty 10  
Aye or No. Very few members of this party had dis-  
tinguished themselves much in Parliament, or could,  
under any circumstances, have been called to fill any  
high office; and those few had generally, like Sir  
William Wyndham, learned in the company of their  
new associates the doctrines of toleration and political  
liberty, and might indeed with strict propriety be  
called Whigs.

§ 20. It was to the Whigs in Opposition, the Patriots,  
as they were called, that the most distinguished of the 20  
English youth who at this season entered into public  
life attached themselves. These inexperienced poli-  
ticians felt all the enthusiasm which the name of  
liberty naturally excites in young and ardent minds.  
They conceived that the theory of the Tory Opposi-  
tion and the practice of Walpole's Government were  
alike inconsistent with the principles of liberty. They  
accordingly repaired to the standard which Pulteney  
had set up. While opposing the Whig minister, they  
professed a firm adherence to the purest doctrines of 30  
Whiggism. He was the schismatic; they were the  
true Catholics, the peculiar people, the depositaries of  
the orthodox faith of Hampden and Russell, the one  
sect which, amidst the corruptions generated by time  
and by the long possession of power, had preserved

- 1 inviolate the principles of the Revolution. Of the young men who attached themselves to this portion of the Opposition the most distinguished were Lyttelton and Pitt.

§ 21. When Pitt entered Parliament, the whole political world was attentively watching the progress of an event which soon added great strength to the Opposition, and particularly to that section of the Opposition in which the young statesman enrolled  
10 himself. The Prince of Wales was gradually becoming more and more estranged from his father and his father's ministers, and more and more friendly to the Patriots.

§ 22. Nothing is more natural than that, in a monarchy where a constitutional Opposition exists, the heir-apparent of the throne should put himself at the head of that Opposition. He is impelled to such a course by every feeling of ambition and of vanity. He cannot be more than second in the estimation of the  
20 party which is in. He is sure to be the first member of the party which is out. The highest favour which the existing administration can expect from him is that he will not discard them. But if he joins the Opposition, all his associates expect that he will promote them; and the feelings which men entertain towards one from whom they hope to obtain great advantages which they have not, are far warmer than the feelings with which they regard one who, at the very utmost, can only leave them in possession of  
30 what they already have. An heir-apparent, therefore, who wishes to enjoy, in the highest perfection, all the pleasure that can be derived from eloquent flattery and profound respect, will always join those who are struggling to force themselves into power. This is, we believe, the true explanation of a fact which Lord

Granville attributed to some natural peculiarity in the illustrious House of Brunswick. "This family", said he at Council, we suppose after his daily half-gallon of Burgundy, "always has quarrelled, and always will quarrel, from generation to generation." He should have known something of the matter, for he had been a favourite with three successive generations of the royal house. We cannot quite admit his explanation; but the fact is indisputable. Since the accession of George the First, there have been four Princes of Wales, and they have all been almost constantly in Opposition.

§ 23. Whatever might have been the motives which induced Prince Frederick to join the party opposed to the Government, his support infused into many members of that party a courage and an energy of which they stood greatly in need. Hitherto it had been impossible for the discontented Whigs not to feel some misgivings when they found themselves dividing, night after night, with uncompromising Jacobites who were known to be in constant communication with the exiled family, or with Tories who had impeached Somers, who had murmured against Harley and St. John as too remiss in the cause of the Church and the landed interest, and who, if they were not inclined to attack the reigning family, yet considered the introduction of that family as, at best, only the less of two great evils, as a necessary but painful and humiliating preservative against Popery. The Minister might plausibly say that Pulteney and Carteret, in the hope of gratifying their own appetite for office and for revenge, did not scruple to serve the purposes of a faction hostile to the Protestant succession. The appearance of Frederick at the head of the patriots silenced this reproach. The leaders of the Opposition

- 1 might now boast that their course was sanctioned by a person as deeply interested as the King himself in maintaining the Act of Settlement, and that, instead of serving the purposes of the Tory party, they had brought that party over to the side of Whiggism. It must indeed be admitted that, though both the King and the Prince behaved in a manner little to their honour, though the father acted harshly, the son disrespectfully, and both childishly, the royal family  
10 was rather strengthened than weakened by the disagreement of its two most distinguished members. A large class of politicians, who had considered themselves as placed under sentence of perpetual exclusion from office, and who, in their despair, had been almost ready to join in a counter-revolution as the only mode of removing the proscription under which they lay, now saw with pleasure an easier and safer road to power opening before them, and thought it far better to wait till, in the natural course of things, the Crown  
20 should descend to the heir of the House of Brunswick, than to risk their lands and their necks in a rising for the House of Stuart. The situation of the royal family resembled the situation of those Scotch families in which father and son took opposite sides during the rebellion, in order that, come what might, the estate might not be forfeited.

- § 24. In April 1736, Frederick was married to the Princess of Saxe-Gotha, with whom he afterwards lived on terms very similar to those on which his  
30 father had lived with Queen Caroline. The Prince adored his wife, and thought her in mind and person the most attractive of her sex. But he thought that conjugal fidelity was an unprincely virtue; and, in order to be like Henry the Fourth and the Regent Orleans, he affected a libertinism for which he had no

taste, and frequently quitted the only woman whom 1  
he loved for ugly and disagreeable mistresses.

§ 25. The address which the House of Commons presented to the King on the occasion of the Prince's marriage was moved, not by the Minister, but by Pulteney, the leader of the Whigs in Opposition. It was on this motion that Pitt, who had not broken silence during the session in which he took his seat, addressed the House for the first time. "A contemporary historian", says Mr. Thackeray, "describes Mr. 10 Pitt's first speech as superior even to the models of ancient eloquence. According to Tindal, it was more ornamented than the speeches of Demosthenes, and less diffuse than those of Cicero." This unmeaning phrase has been a hundred times quoted. That it should ever have been quoted, except to be laughed at, is strange. The vogue which it has obtained may serve to show in how slovenly a way most people are content to think. Did Tindal, who first used it, or Archdeacon Coxe and Mr. Thackeray, who have 20 borrowed it, ever in their lives hear any speaking which did not deserve the same compliment? Did they ever hear speaking less ornamented than that of Demosthenes, or more diffuse than that of Cicero? We know no living orator, from Lord Brougham down to Mr. Hunt, who is not entitled to the same eulogy. It would be no very flattering compliment to a man's figure to say, that he was taller than the Polish Count, and shorter than Giant O'Brien, fatter than the *Anatomie Vivante*, and more slender than Daniel 30 Lambert.

§ 26. Pitt's speech, as it is reported in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, certainly deserves Tindal's compliment, and deserves no other. It is just as empty and wordy as a maiden speech on such an occasion might



- 1 be expected to be. But the fluency and the personal advantages of the young orator instantly caught the ear and eye of his audience. He was, from the day of his first appearance, always heard with attention; and exercise soon developed the great powers which he possessed.

§ 27. In our time, the audience of a member of Parliament is the nation. The three or four hundred persons who may be present while a speech is delivered  
10 may be pleased or disgusted by the voice and action of the orator; but, in the reports which are read the next day by hundreds of thousands, the difference between the noblest and the meanest figure, between the richest and the shrillest tones, between the most graceful and the most uncouth gesture, altogether vanishes. A hundred years ago, scarcely any report of what passed within the walls of the House of Commons was suffered to get abroad. In those times, therefore, the impression which a speaker might  
20 make on the persons who actually heard him was everything. His fame out of doors depended entirely on the report of those who were within the doors. In the Parliaments of that time, therefore, as in the ancient commonwealths, those qualifications which enhance the immediate effect of a speech were far more important ingredients in the composition of an orator than at present. All those qualifications Pitt possessed in the highest degree. On the stage, he would have been the finest Brutus or Coriolanus ever  
30 seen. Those who saw him in his decay, when his health was broken, when his mind was untuned, when he had been removed from that stormy assembly of which he thoroughly knew the temper and over which he possessed unbounded influence, to a small, a torpid, and an unfriendly audience, say that his

speaking was then, for the most part, a low, monotonous muttering, audible only to those who sat close to him, that when violently excited he sometimes raised his voice for a few minutes, but that it soon sank again into an unintelligible murmur. Such was the Earl of Chatham; but such was not William Pitt. His figure, when he first appeared in Parliament, was strikingly graceful and commanding, his features high and noble, his eye full of fire. His voice, even when it sank to a whisper, was heard to the remotest benches; and when he strained it to its full extent, the sound rose like the swell of the organ of a great cathedral, shook the house with its peal, and was heard through lobbies and down staircases, to the Court of Requests and the precincts of Westminster Hall. He cultivated all these eminent advantages with the most assiduous care. His action is described by a very malignant observer as equal to that of Garrick. His play of countenance was wonderful: he frequently disconcerted a hostile orator by a single glance of indignation or scorn. Every tone, from the impassioned cry to the thrilling aside, was perfectly at his command. It is by no means improbable that the pains which he took to improve his great personal advantages had, in some respects, a prejudicial operation, and tended to nourish in him that passion for theatrical effect which, as we have already remarked, was one of the most conspicuous blemishes in his character.

§ 28. But it was not solely or principally to outward accomplishments that Pitt owed the vast influence which, during nearly thirty years, he exercised over the House of Commons. He was undoubtedly a great orator; and, from the descriptions given by his contemporaries, and the fragments of his speeches

1 which still remain, it is not difficult to discover the nature and extent of his oratorical powers.

§ 29. He was no speaker of set speeches. His few prepared discourses were complete failures. The elaborate panegyric which he pronounced on General Wolfe was considered as the very worst of all his performances. "No man", says a critic who had often heard him, "ever knew so little what he was going to say." Indeed his facility amounted to a vice.  
10 He was not the master, but the slave of his own speech. So little self-command had he when once he felt the impulse, that he did not like to take part in a debate when his mind was full of an important secret of state. "I must sit still," he once said to Lord Shelburne on such an occasion, "for, when once I am up, everything that is in my mind comes out."

§ 30. Yet he was not a great debater. That he should not have been so when first he entered the House of Commons is not strange. Scarcely any  
20 person has ever become so without long practice and many failures. It was by slow degrees, as Burke said, that Charles Fox became the most brilliant and powerful debater that ever lived. Charles Fox himself attributed his own success to the resolution which he formed when very young, of speaking, well or ill, at least once every night. "During five whole sessions", he used to say, "I spoke every night but one; and I regret only that I did not speak on that night too." Indeed, with the exception of Mr. Stanley,  
30 whose knowledge of the science of parliamentary defence resembles an instinct, it would be difficult to name any eminent debater who has not made himself a master of his art at the expense of his audience.

§ 31. But, as this art is one which even the ablest men have seldom acquired without long practice, so it

is one which men of respectable abilities, with assiduous and intrepid practice, seldom fail to acquire. It is singular that, in such an art, Pitt, a man of great parts, of great fluency, of great boldness, a man whose whole life was passed in parliamentary conflict, a man who, during several years, was the leading Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons, should never have attained to high excellence. He spoke without premeditation; but his speech followed the course of his own thoughts, and not the course of the previous discussion. He could, indeed, treasure up in his memory some detached expression of an opponent, and make it the text for lively ridicule or solemn reprehension. Some of the most celebrated bursts of his eloquence were called forth by an unguarded word, a laugh, or a cheer. But this was the only sort of reply in which he appears to have excelled. He was perhaps the only great English orator who did not think it any advantage to have the last word, and who generally spoke by choice before his most formidable antagonists. His merit was almost entirely rhetorical. He did not succeed either in exposition or in refutation; but his speeches abounded with lively illustrations, striking apophthegms, well-told anecdotes, happy allusions, passionate appeals. His invective and sarcasm were terrific. Perhaps no English orator was ever so much feared. 10 20

§ 32. But that which gave most effect to his declamation was the air of sincerity, of vehement feeling, of moral elevation, which belonged to all that he said. His style was not always in the purest taste. Several contemporary judges pronounced it too florid. Walpole, in the midst of the rapturous eulogy which he pronounces on one of Pitt's greatest orations, owns that some of the metaphors were too forced. Some 30

- 1 of Pitt's quotations and classical stories are too trite for a clever school-boy. But these were niceties for which the audience cared little. The enthusiasm of the orator infected all who heard him; his ardour and his noble bearing put fire into the most frigid conceit, and gave dignity to the most puerile allusion.

§ 33. His powers soon began to give annoyance to the Government; and Walpole determined to make an example of the patriotic cornet. Pitt was accordingly  
10 dismissed from the service. Mr. Thackeray says that the Minister took this step because he plainly saw that it would have been vain to think of buying over so honourable and disinterested an opponent. We do not dispute Pitt's integrity; but we do not know what proof he had given of it when he was turned out of the army; and we are sure that Walpole was not likely to give credit for inflexible honesty to a young adventurer who had never had an opportunity of refusing any-  
20 thing. The truth is, that it was not Walpole's practice to buy off enemies. Mr. Burke truly says, in the Appeal to the Old Whigs, that Walpole gained very few over from the Opposition. Indeed that great minister knew his business far too well. He knew that, for one mouth which is stopped with a place, fifty other mouths will be instantly opened. He knew that it would have been very bad policy in him to give the world to understand that more was to be got by thwarting his measures than by supporting them. These maxims are as old as the origin of parliamentary  
30 corruption in England. Pepys learned them, as he tells us, from the counsellors of Charles the Second.

§ 34. Pitt was no loser. He was made Groom of the Bedchamber to the Prince of Wales, and continued to declaim against the ministers with unabated violence and with increasing ability. The question of mari-

time right, then agitated between Spain and England, 1  
called forth all his powers. He clamoured for war  
with a vehemence which it is not easy to reconcile  
with reason or humanity, but which appears to Mr.  
Thackeray worthy of the highest admiration. We will  
not stop to argue a point on which we had long  
thought that all well-informed people were agreed.  
We could easily show, we think, that, if any respect be  
due to international law, if right, where societies of  
men are concerned, be anything but another name for 10  
might, if we do not adopt the doctrine of the Buc-  
caneers, which seems to be also the doctrine of Mr.  
Thackeray, that treaties mean nothing within thirty  
degrees of the line, the war with Spain was altogether  
unjustifiable. But the truth is, that the promoters of  
that war have saved the historian the trouble of trying  
them. They have pleaded guilty. "I have seen,"  
says Burke, "and with some care examined, the  
original documents concerning certain important  
transactions of those times. They perfectly satisfied 20  
me of the extreme injustice of that war, and of the  
falseness of the colours which Walpole, to his ruin,  
and guided by a mistaken policy, suffered to be daubed  
over that measure. Some years after, it was my  
fortune to converse with many of the principal actors  
against that minister, and with those who principally  
excited that clamour. None of them, no not one, did  
in the least defend the measure, or attempt to justify  
their conduct. They condemned it as freely as they  
would have done in commenting upon any proceeding 30  
in history in which they were totally unconcerned."  
Pitt, on subsequent occasions, gave ample proof that  
he was one of these penitents. But his conduct, even  
where it appeared most criminal to himself, appears  
admirable to his biographer.

- 1 § 35. The elections of 1741 were unfavourable to Walpole; and after a long and obstinate struggle he found it necessary to resign. The Duke of Newcastle and Lord Hardwicke opened a negotiation with the leading patriots, in the hope of forming an administration on a Whig basis. At this conjuncture, Pitt and those persons who were most nearly connected with him acted in a manner very little to their honour. They attempted to come to an understanding with  
10 Walpole, and offered, if he would use his influence with the King in their favour, to screen him from prosecution. They even went so far as to engage for the concurrence of the Prince of Wales. But Walpole knew that the assistance of the Boys, as he called the young Patriots, would avail him nothing if Pulteney and Carteret should prove intractable, and would be superfluous if the great leaders of the Opposition could be gained. He, therefore, declined the proposal. It is remarkable that Mr. Thackeray, who has thought it  
20 worth while to preserve Pitt's bad college verses, has not even alluded to this story, a story which is supported by strong testimony, and which may be found in so common a book as Coxe's Life of Walpole.

- § 36. The new arrangements disappointed almost every member of the Opposition, and none more than Pitt. He was not invited to become a placeman; and he therefore stuck firmly to his old trade of patriot. Fortunate it was for him that he did so. Had he taken office at this time, he would in all probability  
30 have shared largely in the unpopularity of Pulteney, Sandys, and Carteret. He was now the fiercest and most implacable of those who called for vengeance on Walpole. He spoke with great energy and ability in favour of the most unjust and violent propositions which the enemies of the fallen minister could invent.

He urged the House of Commons to appoint a secret 1  
tribunal for the purpose of investigating the conduct  
of the late First Lord of the Treasury. This was  
done. The great majority of the inquisitors were  
notoriously hostile to the accused statesman. Yet they  
were compelled to own that they could find no fault  
in him. They therefore called for new powers, for a  
bill of indemnity to witnesses, or, in plain words, for a  
bill to reward all who might give evidence, true or  
false, against the Earl of Orford. This bill Pitt sup- 10  
ported, Pitt, who had himself offered to be a screen  
between Lord Orford and public justice. These are  
melancholy facts. Mr. Thackeray omits them, or  
hurries over them as fast as he can; and, as eulogy is  
his business, he is in the right to do so. But, though  
there are many parts of the life of Pitt which it is more  
agreeable to contemplate, we know none more instruc-  
tive. What must have been the general state of  
political morality, when a young man, considered, and  
justly considered, as the most public-spirited and spot- 20  
less statesman of his time, could attempt to force his  
way into office by means so disgraceful!

§ 37. The Bill of Indemnity was rejected by the  
Lords. Walpole withdrew himself quietly from the  
public eye; and the ample space which he had left  
vacant was soon occupied by Carteret. Against Car-  
teret Pitt began to thunder with as much zeal as he  
had ever manifested against Sir Robert. To Carteret  
he transferred most of the hard names which were  
familiar to his eloquence, sole minister, wicked min- 30  
ister, odious minister, execrable minister. The chief  
topic of Pitt's invective was the favour shown to the  
German dominions of the House of Brunswick. He  
attacked with great violence, and with an ability which  
raised him to the very first rank among the parlia-



- 1 mentary speakers, the practice of paying Hanoverian troops with English money. The House of Commons had lately lost some of its most distinguished ornaments. Walpole and Pulteney had accepted peerages; Sir William Wyndham was dead; and among the rising men none could be considered as, on the whole, a match for Pitt.

- § 38. During the recess of 1744 the old Duchess of Marlborough died. She carried to her grave the  
10 reputation of being decidedly the best hater of her time. Yet her love had been infinitely more destructive than her hatred. More than thirty years before, her temper had ruined the party to which she belonged and the husband whom she adored. Time had made her neither wiser nor kinder. Whoever was at any moment great and prosperous was the object of her fiercest detestation. She had hated Walpole; she now hated Carteret. Pope, long before her death, predicted the fate of her vast property.

- 20 “To heirs unknown descends the unguarded store,  
Or wanders, heaven-directed, to the poor.”

Pitt was then one of the poor; and to him Heaven directed a portion of the wealth of the haughty Dowager. She left him a legacy of ten thousand pounds, in consideration of “the noble defence he had made for the support of the laws of England and to prevent the ruin of his country”.

- § 39. The will was made in August. The Duchess died in October. In November Pitt was a courtier.  
30 The Pelhams had forced the King, much against his will, to part with Lord Carteret, who had now become Earl Granville. They proceeded, after this victory, to form the Government on that basis called by the cant name of “the broad bottom”. Lyttelton had a seat

at the Treasury, and several other friends of Pitt were 1  
provided for. But Pitt himself was, for the present,  
forced to be content with promises. The King re-  
sented most highly some expressions which the ardent  
orator had used in the debate on the Hanoverian  
troops. But Newcastle and Pelham expressed the  
strongest confidence that time and their exertions  
would soften the royal displeasure.

§ 40. Pitt, on his part, omitted nothing that might  
facilitate his admission to office. He resigned his 10  
place in the household of Prince Frederick, and, when  
Parliament met, exerted his eloquence in support of  
the Government. The Pelhams were really sincere in  
their endeavours to remove the strong prejudices which  
had taken root in the King's mind. They knew that  
Pitt was not a man to be deceived with ease or  
offended with impunity. They were afraid that they  
should not be long able to put him off with promises.  
Nor was it their interest so to put him off. There  
was a strong tie between him and them. He was 20  
the enemy of their enemy. The brothers hated and  
dreaded the eloquent, aspiring, and imperious Gran-  
ville. They had traced his intrigues in many quarters.  
They knew his influence over the royal mind. They  
knew that, as soon as a favourable opportunity should  
arrive, he would be recalled to the head of affairs.  
They resolved to bring things to a crisis; and the  
question on which they took issue with their master  
was, whether Pitt should or should not be admitted  
to office. They chose their time with more skill than 30  
generosity. It was when rebellion was actually raging  
in Britain, when the Pretender was master of the  
northern extremity of the island, that they tendered  
their resignations. The king found himself deserted,  
in one day, by the whole strength of that party which

- 1 had placed his family on the throne. Lord Granville tried to form a government; but it soon appeared that the parliamentary interest of the Pelhams was irresistible, and that the King's favourite statesman could count only on about thirty Lords and eighty members of the House of Commons. The scheme was given up. Granville went away laughing. The ministers came back stronger than ever; and the King was now no longer able to refuse anything that  
10 they might be pleased to demand. He could only mutter that it was very hard that Newcastle, who was not fit to be chamberlain to the most insignificant prince in Germany, should dictate to the King of England.

- § 41. One concession the ministers graciously made. They agreed that Pitt should not be placed in a situation in which it would be necessary for him to have frequent interviews with the King. Instead, therefore, of making their new ally Secretary-at-War  
20 as they had intended, they appointed him Vice-Treasurer of Ireland, and in a few months promoted him to the office of Paymaster of the Forces.

- § 42. This was, at that time, one of the most lucrative offices in the Government. The salary was but a small part of the emolument which the Paymaster derived from his place. He was allowed to keep a large sum, which, even in time of peace, was seldom less than one hundred thousand pounds, constantly in his hands; and the interest on this sum he  
30 might appropriate to his own use. This practice was not secret, nor was it considered as disreputable. It was the practice of men of undoubted honour, both before and after the time of Pitt. He, however, refused to accept one farthing beyond the salary which the law had annexed to his office. It had been

usual for foreign princes who received the pay of 1  
England to give to the Paymaster of the Forces a  
small percentage on the subsidies. These ignominious  
vails Pitt resolutely declined.

§ 43. Disinterestedness of this kind was, in his  
days, very rare. His conduct surprised and amused  
politicians. It excited the warmest admiration through-  
out the body of the people. In spite of the incon-  
sistencies of which Pitt had been guilty, in spite of 10  
the strange contrast between his violence in Opposition  
and his tameness in office, he still possessed a large  
share of the public confidence. The motives which  
may lead a politician to change his connections or his  
general line of conduct are often obscure; but dis-  
interestedness in pecuniary matters everybody can  
understand. Pitt was thenceforth considered as a  
man who was proof to all sordid temptations. If he  
acted ill, it might be from an error in judgment; it  
might be from resentment; it might be from ambition.  
But, poor as he was, he had vindicated himself from 20  
all suspicion of covetousness.

§ 44. Eight quiet years followed, eight years during  
which the minority, which had been feeble ever since  
Lord Granville had been overthrown, continued to  
dwindle till it became almost invisible. Peace was  
made with France and Spain in 1748. Prince  
Frederick died in 1751; and with him died the very  
semblance of opposition. All the most distinguished  
survivors of the party which had supported Walpole  
and of the party which had opposed him were united 30  
under his successor. The fiery and vehement spirit  
of Pitt had for a time been laid to rest. He silently  
acquiesced in that very system of continental measures  
which he had lately condemned. He ceased to talk  
disrespectfully about Hanover. He did not object to

1 the treaty with Spain, though that treaty left us exactly where we had been when he uttered his spirit-stirring harangues against the pacific policy of Walpole. Now and then glimpses of his former self appeared; but they were few and transient. Pelham knew with whom he had to deal, and felt that an ally, so little used to control and so capable of inflicting injury, might well be indulged in an occasional fit of waywardness. 11 84

10 § 45. Two men, little, if at all, inferior to Pitt in powers of mind, held, like him, subordinate offices in the Government. One of these, Murray, was successively Solicitor-General and Attorney-General. This distinguished person far surpassed Pitt in correctness of taste, in power of reasoning, in depth and variety of knowledge. His parliamentary eloquence never blazed into sudden flashes of dazzling brilliancy; but its clear, placid, and mellow splendour was never for an instant overclouded. Intellectually he was, we  
 20 believe, fully equal to Pitt; but he was deficient in the moral qualities to which Pitt owed most of his success. Murray wanted the energy, the courage, the all-grasping and all-risking ambition, which make men great in stirring times. His heart was a little cold, his temper cautious even to timidity, his manners decorous even to formality. He never exposed his fortunes or his fame to any risk which he could avoid. At one time he might, in all probability, have been Prime Minister. But the object of his wishes was the  
 30 judicial bench. The situation of Chief Justice might not be so splendid as that of First Lord of the Treasury; but it was dignified; it was quiet; it was secure; and therefore it was the favourite situation of Murray.

§ 46. Fox, the father of the great man whose mighty

efforts in the cause of peace, of truth, and of liberty, 1  
have made that name immortal, was Secretary-at-War.  
He was a favourite with the King, with the Duke of  
Cumberland, and with some of the most powerful  
members of the great Whig connection. His parlia-  
mentary talents were of the highest order. As a  
speaker he was in almost all respects the very opposite  
to Pitt. His figure was ungraceful; his face, as  
Reynolds and Nollekens have preserved it to us, in- 10  
dicated a strong understanding; but the features were  
coarse, and the general aspect dark and lowering.  
His manner was awkward; his delivery was hesitating;  
he was often at a stand for want of a word; but as a  
debater, as a master of that keen, weighty, manly  
logic which is suited to the discussion of political  
questions, he has perhaps never been surpassed except  
by his son. In reply he was as decidedly superior to  
Pitt as in declamation he was Pitt's inferior. In-  
tellectually the balance was nearly even between the 20  
rivals. But here, again, the moral qualities of Pitt  
turned the scale. Fox had undoubtedly many virtues.  
In natural disposition as well as in talents he bore a  
great resemblance to his more celebrated son. He  
had the same sweetness of temper, the same strong  
passions, the same openness, boldness, and impetu-  
osity, the same cordiality towards friends, the same  
placability towards enemies. No man was more  
warmly or justly beloved by his family or by his  
associates. But unhappily he had been trained in a  
bad political school, in a school the doctrines of 30  
which were, that political virtue is the mere coquetry  
of political prostitution, that every patriot has his  
price, that Government can be carried on only by  
means of corruption, and that the state is given as a  
prey to statesmen. These maxims were too much in

- 1 vogue throughout the lower ranks of Walpole's party, and were too much encouraged by Walpole himself, who, from contempt of what is in our day vulgarly called *humbug*, often ran extravagantly and offensively into the opposite extreme. The loose political morality of Fox presented a remarkable contrast to the ostentatious purity of Pitt. The nation distrusted the former, and placed implicit confidence in the latter. But almost all the statesmen of the age had still to
- 10 learn that the confidence of the nation was worth having. While things went on quietly, while there was no opposition, while everything was given by the favour of a small ruling junto, Fox had a decided advantage over Pitt; but when dangerous times came, when Europe was convulsed with war, when Parliament was broken up into factions, when the public mind was violently excited, the favourite of the people rose to supreme power, while his rival sank into insignificance.
- 20 § 47. Early in the year 1754 Henry Pelham died unexpectedly. "Now I shall have no more peace", exclaimed the old King, when he heard the news. He was in the right. Pelham had succeeded in bringing together, and keeping together, all the talents of the kingdom. By his death the highest post to which an English subject can aspire was left vacant; and at the same moment, the influence which had yoked together and reined in so many turbulent and ambitious spirits was withdrawn.
- 30 § 48. Within a week after Pelham's death it was determined that the Duke of Newcastle should be placed at the head of the Treasury; but the arrangement was still far from complete. Who was to be the leading Minister of the Crown in the House of Commons? Was the office to be entrusted to a man of

eminent talents? And would not such a man in such a place demand and obtain a larger share of power and patronage than Newcastle would be disposed to concede? Was a mere drudge to be employed? And what probability was there that a mere drudge would be able to manage a large and stormy assembly, abounding with able and experienced men?

§ 49. Pope has said of that wretched miser Sir John Cutler

“Cutler saw tenants break and houses fall  
For very want : he could not build a wall”. 10

Newcastle's love of power resembled Cutler's love of money. It was an avarice which thwarted itself, a penny-wise and pound-foolish cupidity. An immediate outlay was so painful to him that he would not venture to make the most desirable improvement. If he could have found it in his heart to cede at once a portion of his authority, he might probably have ensured the continuance of what remained. But he thought it better to construct a weak and rotten government, which tottered at the smallest breath, and fell in the first storm, than to pay the necessary price for sound and durable materials. He wished to find some person who would be willing to accept the lead of the House of Commons on terms similar to those on which Secretary Craggs had acted under Sunderland, five-and-thirty years before. Craggs could hardly be called a minister. He was a mere agent for the Minister. He was not trusted with the higher secrets of state, but obeyed implicitly the directions of his superior, and was, to use Doldington's expression, merely Lord Sunderland's man. But times were changed. Since the days of Sunderland, the importance of the House of Commons had been constantly on the increase. During many years, the



- 1 person who conducted the business of the Government in that House had almost always been Prime Minister. In these circumstances, it was not to be supposed that any person who possessed the talents necessary for the situation would stoop to accept it on such terms as Newcastle was disposed to offer.

- § 50. Pitt was ill at Bath; and, had he been well and in London, neither the King nor Newcastle would have been disposed to make any overtures to him.
- 10 The cool and wary Murray had set his heart on professional objects. Negotiations were opened with Fox. Newcastle behaved like himself, that is to say, childishly and basely. The proposition which he made was that Fox should be Secretary of State, with the lead of the House of Commons; that the disposal of the secret-service money, or, in plain words, the business of buying members of Parliament, should be left to the First Lord of the Treasury; but that Fox should be exactly informed of the way in which this
- 20 fund was employed.

- § 51. To these conditions Fox assented. But the next day everything was in confusion. Newcastle had changed his mind. The conversation which took place between Fox and the Duke is one of the most curious in English history. "My brother," said Newcastle, "when he was at the Treasury, never told anybody what he did with the secret-service money. No more will I." The answer was obvious. Pelham had been, not only First Lord of the Treasury, but also
- 30 manager of the House of Commons; and it was therefore unnecessary for him to confide to any other person his dealings with the members of that House. "But how", said Fox, "can I lead in the Commons without information on this head? How can I talk to gentlemen when I do not know which of them have

received gratifications and which have not? And 1  
 who", he continued, "is to have the disposal of  
 places?"—"I myself", said the Duke.—"How then  
 am I to manage the House of Commons?"—"Oh, let  
 the members of the House of Commons come to me."  
 Fox then mentioned the general election which was  
 approaching, and asked how the ministerial boroughs  
 were to be filled up. "Do not trouble yourself", said  
 Newcastle; "that is all settled." This was too much  
 for human nature to bear. Fox refused to accept the 10  
 Secretaryship of State on such terms; and the Duke  
 confided the management of the House of Commons  
 to a dull, harmless man, whose name is almost for-  
 gotten in our time, Sir Thomas Robinson.

§ 52. When Pitt returned from Bath he affected  
 great moderation, though his haughty soul was boiling  
 with resentment. He did not complain of the manner  
 in which he had been passed by, but said openly that,  
 in his opinion, Fox was the fittest man to lead the  
 House of Commons. The rivals, reconciled by their 20  
 common interest and their common enmities, con-  
 certed a plan of operations for the next session. "Sir  
 Thomas Robinson lead us!" said Pitt to Fox. "The  
 Duke might as well send his jack-boot to lead us."

§ 53. The elections of 1754 were favourable to  
 the administration. But the aspect of foreign affairs  
 was threatening. In India the English and the French  
 had been employed, ever since the peace of Aix-la-  
 Chapelle, in cutting each other's throats. They had  
 lately taken to the same practice in America. It 30  
 might have been foreseen that stirring times were at  
 hand, times which would call for abilities very different  
 from those of Newcastle and Robinson.

§ 54. In November the Parliament met; and before  
 the end of that month the new Secretary of State had

1 been so unmercifully baited by the Paymaster of the Forces and the Secretary at War that he was thoroughly sick of his situation. Fox attacked him with great force and acrimony. Pitt affected a kind of contemptuous tenderness for Sir Thomas, and directed his attacks principally against Newcastle. On one occasion he asked in tones of thunder whether Parliament sat only to register the edicts of one too-powerful subject? The Duke was scared out of his wits. He  
10 was afraid to dismiss the mutineers; he was afraid to promote them; but it was absolutely necessary to do something. Fox, as the less proud and intractable of the refractory pair, was preferred. A seat in the Cabinet was offered to him on condition that he would give efficient support to the Ministry in Parliament. In an evil hour for his fame and his fortunes he accepted the offer, and abandoned his connection with Pitt, who never forgave this desertion.

§ 55. Sir Thomas, assisted by Fox, contrived to get  
20 through the business of the year without much trouble. Pitt was waiting his time. The negotiations pending between France and England took every day a more unfavourable aspect. Towards the close of the session the king sent a message to inform the House of Commons that he had found it necessary to make preparations for war. The House returned an address of thanks, and passed a vote of credit. During the recess the old animosity of both nations was inflamed by a series of disastrous events. An English force  
30 was cut off in America; and several French merchantmen were taken in the West Indian Seas. It was plain that an appeal to arms was at hand.

§ 56. The first object of the King was to secure Hanover; and Newcastle was disposed to gratify his master. Treaties were concluded, after the fashion of

those times, with several petty German princes, who bound themselves to find soldiers if England would find money; and, as it was suspected that Frederick the Second had set his heart on the electoral dominions of his uncle, Russia was hired to keep Prussia in awe. 1

§ 57. When the stipulations of these treaties were made known, there arose throughout the kingdom a murmur from which a judicious observer might easily prognosticate the approach of a tempest. Newcastle encountered strong opposition, even from those whom he had always considered as his tools. Legge, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, refused to sign the Treasury warrants which were necessary to give effect to the treaties. Those persons who were supposed to possess the confidence of the young Prince of Wales and of his mother held very menacing language. In this perplexity Newcastle sent for Pitt, hugged him, patted him, smirked at him, wept over him, and lisped out the highest compliments and the most splendid promises. The King, who had hitherto been as sulky as possible, would be civil to him at the levee; he should be brought into the Cabinet; he should be consulted about everything; if he would only be so good as to support the Hessian subsidy in the House of Commons. Pitt coldly declined the proffered seat in the Cabinet, expressed the highest love and reverence for the King, and said that, if his Majesty felt a strong personal interest in the Hessian treaty he would so far deviate from the line which he had traced out for himself as to give that treaty his support. "Well, and the Russian subsidy," said Newcastle. "No," said Pitt, "not a system of 'subsidies'." The Duke summoned Lord Hardwicke to his aid; but Pitt was inflexible. Murray would do nothing. Robinson 20 30

- 1 could do nothing. It was necessary to have recourse to Fox. He became Secretary of State, with the full authority of a leader in the House of Commons; and Sir Thomas was pensioned off on the Irish Establishment.

- § 58. In November, 1755, the Houses met. Public expectation was wound up to the height. After ten quiet years there was to be an Opposition, countenanced by the heir-apparent of the throne, and headed  
10 by the most brilliant orator of the age. The debate on the address was long remembered as one of the greatest parliamentary conflicts of that generation. It began at three in the afternoon, and lasted till five the next morning. It was on this night that Gerard Hamilton delivered that single speech from which his nickname was derived. His eloquence threw into the shade every orator except Pitt, who declaimed against the subsidies for an hour and a half with extraordinary energy and effect. Those powers which had formerly  
20 spread terror through the majorities of Walpole and Carteret were now displayed in their highest perfection before an audience long unaccustomed to such exhibitions. One fragment of this celebrated oration remains in a state of tolerable preservation. It is the comparison between the coalition of Fox and Newcastle, and the junction of the Rhone and the Saone. "At Lyons", said Pitt, "I was taken to see the place where the two rivers meet, the one gentle, feeble, languid, and, though languid, yet of no depth, the other a  
30 boisterous and impetuous torrent: but different as they are they meet at last." The amendment moved by the Opposition was rejected by a great majority; and Pitt and Legge were immediately dismissed from their offices.

§ 59. During several months the contest in the House

of Commons was extremely sharp. Warm debates 1  
took place on the estimates, debates still warmer on  
the subsidiary treaties. The Government succeeded  
in every division; but the fame of Pitt's eloquence, and  
the influence of his lofty and determined character,  
continued to increase through the session; and the  
events which followed the prorogation made it utterly  
impossible for any other person to manage the Parlia-  
ment or the country.

§ 60. The war began in every part of the world with 10  
events disastrous to England, and even more shameful  
than disastrous. But the most humiliating of these  
events was the loss of Minorca. The Duke of Riche-  
lieu, an old fop who had passed his life from sixteen  
to sixty in seducing women for whom he cared not  
one straw, landed on that island, and succeeded in  
reducing it. Admiral Byng was sent from Gibraltar to  
throw succours into Port-Mahon; but he did not think  
fit to engage the French squadron, and sailed back  
without having effected his purpose. The people were 20  
inflamed to madness. A storm broke forth, which  
appalled even those who remembered the days of  
Excise and of South-Sea. The shops were filled with  
libels and caricatures. The walls were covered with  
placards. The city of London called for vengeance,  
and the cry was echoed from every corner of the king-  
dom. Dorsetshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire,  
Buckinghamshire, Somersetshire, Lancashire, Suffolk,  
Shropshire, Surrey, sent up strong addresses to the  
throne, and instructed their representatives to vote for 30  
a strict enquiry into the causes of the late disasters.  
In the great towns the feeling was as strong as in the  
counties. In some of the instructions it was even  
recommended that the supplies should be stopped.

§ 61. The nation was in a state of angry and sullen

- 1 despondency, almost unparalleled in history. People have, in all ages, been in the habit of talking about the good old times of their ancestors, and the degeneracy of their contemporaries. This is in general merely a cant. But in 1756 it was something more. At this time appeared Brown's Estimate, a book now remembered only by the allusions in Cowper's *Table Talk* and in Burke's *Letters on a Regicide Peace*. It was universally read, admired, and believed. The  
10 author fully convinced his readers that they were a race of cowards and scoundrels; that nothing could save them; that they were on the point of being enslaved by their enemies, and that they richly deserved their fate. Such were the speculations to which ready credence was given at the outset of the most glorious war in which England had ever been engaged.

§ 62. Newcastle now began to tremble for his place, and for the only thing which was dearer to him than  
20 his place, his neck. The people were not in a mood to be trifled with. Their cry was for blood. For this once they might be contented with the sacrifice of Byng. But what if fresh disasters should take place? What if an unfriendly sovereign should ascend the throne? What if a hostile House of Commons should be chosen?

§ 63. At length, in October, the decisive crisis came. The new Secretary of State had been long sick of the perfidy and levity of the First Lord of the  
30 Treasury, and began to fear that he might be made a scapegoat to save the old intriguer who, imbecile as he seemed, never wanted dexterity where danger was to be avoided. Fox threw up his office. Newcastle had recourse to Murray; but Murray had now within his reach the favourite object of his ambition. The

situation of Chief-Justice of the King's Bench was 1  
vacant; and the Attorney-General was fully resolved  
to obtain it, or to go into Opposition. Newcastle  
offered him any terms, the Duchy of Lancaster for life,  
a tellership of the Exchequer, any amount of pension,  
two thousand a year, six thousand a year. When the  
Ministers found that Murray's mind was made up,  
they pressed for delay, the delay of a session, a month,  
a week, a day. Would he only make his appearance  
once more in the House of Commons? Would he 10  
only speak in favour of the address? He was inexorable, and peremptorily said that they might give or withhold the Chief-Justiceship, but that he would be Attorney-General no longer.

§ 64. Newcastle now contrived to overcome the prejudices of the King, and overtures were made to Pitt, through Lord Hardwicke. Pitt knew his power, and showed that he knew it. He demanded as an indispensable condition that Newcastle should be altogether excluded from the new arrangement. 20

§ 65. The Duke was in a state of ludicrous distress. He ran about chattering and crying, asking advice and listening to none. In the meantime the session drew near. The public excitement was unabated. Nobody could be found to face Pitt and Fox in the House of Commons. Newcastle's heart failed him, and he tendered his resignation.

§ 66. The King sent for Fox, and directed him to form the plan of an administration in concert with Pitt. But Pitt had not forgotten old injuries, and 30 positively refused to act with Fox.

§ 67. The King now applied to the Duke of Devonshire, and this mediator succeeded in making an arrangement. He consented to take the Treasury. Pitt became Secretary of State, with the lead of the



- 1 House of Commons. The Great Seal was put into commission. Legge returned to the Exchequer; and Lord Temple, whose sister Pitt had lately married, was placed at the head of the Admiralty.

§ 68. It was clear from the first that this administration would last but a very short time. It lasted not quite five months; and, during those five months, Pitt and Lord Temple were treated with rudeness by the King, and found but feeble support in the House of  
10 Commons. It is a remarkable fact, that the Opposition prevented the re-election of some of the new Ministers. Pitt, who sat for one of the boroughs which were in the Pelham interest, found some difficulty in obtaining a seat after his acceptance of the seals. So destitute was the new Government of that sort of influence without which no government could then be durable. One of the arguments most frequently urged against the Reform Bill was that, under a system of popular representation, men whose pres-  
20 ence in the House of Commons was necessary to the conducting of public business might often find it impossible to find seats. Should this inconvenience ever be felt, there cannot be the slightest difficulty in devising and applying a remedy. But those who threatened us with this evil ought to have remembered that, under the old system, a great man called to power at a great crisis by the voice of the whole nation was in danger of being excluded, by an aristocratical cabal, from that House of which he was the  
30 most distinguished ornament.

§ 69. The most important event of this short administration was the trial of Byng. On that subject public opinion is still divided. We think the punishment of the Admiral altogether unjust and absurd. Treachery, cowardice, ignorance amounting to what

lawyers have called *crassa ignorantia*, are fit objects 1  
of severe penal inflictions. But Byng was not found  
guilty of treachery, of cowardice, or of gross ignorance  
of his profession. He died for doing what the most  
loyal subject, the most intrepid warrior, the most  
experienced seaman, might have done. He died for  
an error in judgment, an error such as the greatest  
commanders —Frederick, Napoleon, Wellington—have  
often committed, and have often acknowledged. Such  
errors are not proper objects of punishment, for this 10  
reason, that the punishing of such errors tends not to  
prevent them, but to produce them. The dread of  
an ignominious death may stimulate sluggishness to  
exertion, may keep a traitor to his standard, may  
prevent a coward from running away, but it has no  
tendency to bring out those qualities which enable  
men to form prompt and judicious decisions in great  
emergencies. The best marksman may be expected  
to fail when the apple which is to be his mark is  
set on his child's head. We cannot conceive any- 20  
thing more likely to deprive an officer of his self-  
possession at the time when he most needs it, than  
the knowledge that, if the judgment of his superiors  
should not agree with his, he will be executed with  
every circumstance of shame. Queens, it has often  
been said, run far greater risk in childbed than  
private women, merely because their medical atten-  
dants are more anxious. The surgeon who attended  
Marie Louise was altogether unnerved by his emotions.  
"Compose yourself", said Bonaparte; "imagine that 30  
you are assisting a poor girl in the Faubourg Saint  
Antoine." This was surely a far wiser course than  
that of the Eastern king in the *Arabian Nights' Enter-  
tainments*, who proclaimed that the physicians who  
failed to cure his daughter should have their heads

- 1 chopped off. Bonaparte knew mankind well; and as he acted towards this surgeon, he acted towards his officers. No sovereign was ever so indulgent to mere errors of judgment; and it is certain that no sovereign ever had in his service so many military men fit for the highest commands.

§ 70. Pitt acted a brave and honest part on this occasion. He ventured to put both his power and his popularity to hazard, and spoke manfully for Byng, 10 both in Parliament and in the royal presence. But the King was inexorable. "The House of Commons, Sir," said Pitt, "seems inclined to mercy." "Sir," answered the King, "you have taught me to look for the sense of my people in other places than the House of Commons." The saying has more point than most of those which are recorded of George the Second, and, though sarcastically meant, contains a high and just compliment to Pitt.

§ 71. The King disliked Pitt, but absolutely hated 20 Temple. The new Secretary of State, his majesty said, had never read Vatel, and was tedious and pompous, but respectful. The First Lord of the Admiralty was grossly impertinent. Walpole tells one story, which, we fear, is much too good to be true. He assures us that Temple entertained his royal master with an elaborate parallel between Byng's behaviour at Minorca and his Majesty's behaviour at Oudenarde, in which the advantage was all on the side of the Admiral.

30 § 72. This state of things could not last. Early in April, Pitt and all his friends were turned out, and Newcastle was summoned to St. James's. But the public discontent was not extinguished. It had subsided when Pitt was called to power. But it still glowed under the embers; and it now burst at once

into a flame. The stocks fell. The Common Council met. The freedom of the city was voted to Pitt. All the greatest corporate towns followed the example. "For some weeks", says Walpole, "it rained gold boxes."

§ 73. This was the turning-point of Pitt's life. It might have been expected that a man of so haughty and vehement a nature, treated so ungraciously by the Court, and supported so enthusiastically by the people, would have eagerly taken the first opportunity of showing his power and gratifying his resentment; and an opportunity was not wanting. The members for many counties and large towns had been instructed to vote for an enquiry into the circumstances which had produced the miscarriage of the preceding year. A motion for enquiry had been carried in the House of Commons, without opposition; and a few days after Pitt's dismissal the investigation commenced. Newcastle and his colleagues obtained a vote of acquittal; but the minority were so strong that they could not venture to ask for a vote of approbation, as they had at first intended; and it was thought by some shrewd observers that, if Pitt had exerted himself to the utmost of his power, the enquiry might have ended in a censure, if not in an impeachment.

§ 74. Pitt showed on this occasion a moderation and self-government which was not habitual to him. He had found by experience, that he could not stand alone. His eloquence and his popularity had done much, very much, for him. Without rank, without fortune, without borough interest, hated by the King, hated by the aristocracy, he was a person of the first importance in the state. He had been suffered to form a ministry, and to pronounce sentence of exclusion on all his rivals, on the most powerful noble-

- 1 man of the Whig party, on the ablest debater in the House of Commons. And he now found that he had gone too far. The English Constitution was not, indeed, without a popular element. But other elements generally predominated. The confidence and admiration of the nation might make a statesman formidable at the head of an Opposition, might load him with framed and glazed parchments and gold boxes, might possibly, under very peculiar circumstances, such as those of the preceding year, raise him for a time to power. But, constituted as Parliament then was, the favourite of the people could not depend on a majority in the people's own House. The Duke of Newcastle, however contemptible in morals, manners, and understanding, was a dangerous enemy. His rank, his wealth, his unrivalled parliamentary interest, would alone have made him important. But this was not all. The Whig aristocracy regarded him as their leader. His long possession of power  
20 had given him a kind of prescriptive right to possess it still. The House of Commons had been elected when he was at the head of affairs. The members for the ministerial boroughs had all been nominated by him. The public offices swarmed with his creatures.

- § 75. Pitt desired power; and he desired it, we really believe, from high and generous motives. He was, in the strict sense of the word, a patriot. He had none of that philanthropy which the great French writers of his time preached to all the nations of  
30 Europe. He loved England as an Athenian loved the City of the Violet Crown, as a Roman loved the City of the Seven Hills. He saw his country insulted and defeated. He saw the national spirit sinking. Yet he knew what the resources of the empire, vigorously employed, could effect; and he felt that he was the

man to employ them vigorously. "My Lord," he 1  
said to the Duke of Devonshire, "I am sure that I  
can save this country, and that nobody else can."

§ 76. Desiring then to be in power, and feeling that  
his abilities and the public confidence were not alone  
sufficient to keep him in power against the wishes of  
the Court and of the aristocracy, he began to think of  
a coalition with Newcastle.

§ 77. Newcastle was equally disposed to a recon- 10  
ciliation. He, too, had profited by his recent ex-  
perience. He had found that the Court and the  
aristocracy, though powerful, were not everything in  
the state. A strong oligarchical connection, a great  
borough interest, ample patronage, and secret-service  
money might, in quiet times, be all that a Minister  
needed; but it was unsafe to trust wholly to such  
support in time of war, of discontent, and of agitation.  
The composition of the House of Commons was not  
wholly aristocratical; and, whatever be the compo-  
sition of large deliberative assemblies, their spirit is 20  
always in some degree popular. Where there are free  
debates, eloquence must have admirers, and reason  
must make converts. Where there is a free press, the  
governors must live in constant awe of the opinions of  
the governed.

§ 78. Thus these two men, so unlike in character,  
so lately mortal enemies, were necessary to each other.  
Newcastle had fallen in November, for want of that  
public confidence which Pitt possessed, and of that  
parliamentary support which Pitt was better qualified 30  
than any man of his time to give. Pitt had fallen in  
April, for want of that species of influence which  
Newcastle had passed his whole life in acquiring and  
hoarding. Neither of them had power enough to  
support himself. Each of them had power enough to

- 1 overturn the other. Their union would be irresistible. Neither the King nor any party in the state would be able to stand against them.

§ 79. Under these circumstances, Pitt was not disposed to proceed to extremities against his predecessors in office. Something, however, was due to consistency; and something was necessary for the preservation of his popularity. He did little; but that little he did in such manner as to produce great  
10 effect. He came down to the House in all the pomp of gout, his legs swathed in flannels, his arm dangling in a sling. He kept his seat through several fatiguing days, in spite of pain and languor. He uttered a few sharp and vehement sentences; but during the greater part of the discussion his language was unusually gentle.

§ 80. When the enquiry had terminated without a vote either of approbation or of censure, the great obstacle to a coalition was removed. Many obstacles,  
20 however, remained. The King was still rejoicing in his deliverance from the proud and aspiring Minister who had been forced on him by the cry of the nation. His Majesty's indignation was excited to the highest point when it appeared that Newcastle, who had, during thirty years, been loaded with marks of royal favour, and who had bound himself by a solemn promise never to coalesce with Pitt, was meditating a new perfidy. Of all the statesmen of that age, Fox had the largest share of royal favour. A coalition  
30 between Fox and Newcastle was the arrangement which the King wished to bring about. But the Duke was too cunning to fall into such a snare. As a speaker in Parliament, Fox might perhaps be, on the whole, as useful to an administration as his great rival; but he was one of the most unpopular men in England.

Then, again, Newcastle felt all that jealousy of Fox 1 which, according to the proverb, generally exists between two of a trade. Fox would certainly intermeddle with that department which the Duke was most desirous to reserve entire to himself, the jobbing department. Pitt, on the other hand, was quite willing to leave the drudgery of corruption to any who might be inclined to undertake it.

§ 81. During eleven weeks England remained without a ministry, and in the meantime Parliament was 10 sitting and a war was raging. The prejudices of the King, the haughtiness of Pitt, the jealousy, levity, and treachery of Newcastle, delayed the settlement. Pitt knew the Duke too well to trust him without security. The Duke loved power too much to be inclined to give security. While they were haggling, the King was in vain attempting to produce a final rupture between them, or to form a Government without them. At one time he applied to Lord Waldegrave, an honest 20 and sensible man, but unpractised in affairs. Lord Waldegrave had the courage to accept the Treasury, but soon found that no administration formed by him had the smallest chance of standing a single week.

§ 82. At length the King's pertinacity yielded to the necessity of the case. After exclaiming with great bitterness, and with some justice, against the Whigs, who ought, he said, to be ashamed to talk about liberty while they submitted to be the footmen of the Duke of Newcastle, his Majesty submitted. The influence of Leicester House prevailed on Pitt to 30 abate a little, and but a little, of his high demands; and all at once, out of the chaos in which parties had for some time been rising, falling, meeting, separating, arose a government as strong at home as that of Pelham, as successful abroad as that of Godolphin.



1     § 83. Newcastle took the Treasury. Pitt was Secretary of State, with the lead in the House of Commons, and with the supreme direction of the war and of foreign affairs. Fox, the only man who could have given much annoyance to the new Government, was silenced with the office of Paymaster, which, during the continuance of that war, was probably the most lucrative place in the whole Government. He was poor, and the situation was tempting; yet it cannot but  
10 seem extraordinary that a man who had played a first part in politics, and whose abilities had been found not unequal to that part, who had sat in the Cabinet, who had led the House of Commons, who had been twice entrusted by the King with the office of forming a ministry, who was regarded as the rival of Pitt, and who at one time seemed likely to be a successful rival, should have consented, for the sake of emolument, to take a subordinate place, and to give silent votes for all the measures of a government to the deliberations  
20 of which he was not summoned.

§ 84. The first acts of the new administration were characterized rather by vigour than by judgment. Expeditions were sent against different parts of the French coast with little success. The small island of Aix was taken, Rochefort threatened, a few ships burned in the harbour of St. Maloes, and a few guns and mortars brought home as trophies from the fortifications of Cherbourg. But soon conquests of a very different kind filled the kingdom with pride and  
80 rejoicing. A succession of victories undoubtedly brilliant, and, as it was thought, not barren, raised to the highest point the fame of the minister to whom the conduct of the war had been entrusted. In July, 1758, Louisburg fell. The whole island of Cape Breton was reduced. The fleet to which the Court of

Versailles had confided the defence of French America 1  
 was destroyed. The captured standards were borne  
 in triumph from Kensington Palace to the city, and  
 were suspended in St. Paul's Church, amidst the roar  
 of guns and kettle-drums, and the shouts of an immense  
 multitude. Addresses of congratulation came in from  
 all the great towns of England. Parliament met only to  
 decree thanks and monuments, and to bestow, without  
 one murmur, supplies more than double of those  
 which had been given during the war of the Grand 10  
 Alliance.

§ 85. The year 1759 opened with the conquest of  
 Goree. Next fell Guadeloupe; then 'Ticonderoga; then  
 Niagara. The Toulon squadron was completely de-  
 feated by Boscawen off Cape Lagos. But the greatest  
 exploit of the year was the achievement of Wolfe on  
 the heights of Abraham. The news of his glorious  
 death and of the fall of Quebec reached London in  
 the very week in which the Houses met. All was joy  
 and triumph. Envy and faction were forced to join 20  
 in the general applause. Whigs and Tories vied with  
 each other in extolling the genius and energy of Pitt.  
 His colleagues were never talked of or thought of.  
 The House of Commons, the nation, the colonies, our  
 allies, our enemies, had their eyes fixed on him alone.

§ 86. Scarcely had Parliament voted a monument  
 to Wolfe when another great event called for fresh  
 rejoicings. The Brest fleet, under the command of  
 Conflans, had put out to sea. It was overtaken by an  
 English squadron under Hawke. Conflans attempted 30  
 to take shelter close under the French coast. The  
 shore was rocky; the night was black; the wind was  
 furious; the waves of the Bay of Biscay ran high. But  
 Pitt had infused into every branch of the service a  
 spirit which had long been unknown. No British

- 1 seaman was disposed to err on the same side with Byng. The pilot told Hawke that the attack could not be made without the greatest danger. "You have done your duty in remonstrating", answered Hawke; "I will answer for everything. I command you to lay me alongside the French Admiral." Two French ships of the line struck. Four were destroyed. The rest hid themselves in the rivers of Brittany.

- § 87. The year 1760 came; and still triumph fol-  
10 lowed triumph. Montreal was taken; the whole province of Canada was subjugated; the French fleets underwent a succession of disasters in the seas of Europe and America.

- § 88. In the meantime conquests equalling in rapidity, and far surpassing in magnitude, those of Cortes and Pizarro, had been achieved in the East. In the space of three years the English had founded a mighty empire. The French had been defeated in every part of India. Chandernagore had surrendered  
20 to Clive, Pondicherry to Coote. Throughout Bengal, Bahar, Orissa, and the Carnatic, the authority of the East India Company was more absolute than that of Acbar or Aurungzebe had ever been.

- § 89. On the continent of Europe the odds were against England. We had but one important ally, the King of Prussia; and he was attacked, not only by France, but also by Russia and Austria. Yet even on the Continent the energy of Pitt triumphed over all difficulties. Vehemently as he had condemned the  
30 practice of subsidizing foreign princes, he now carried that practice further than Carteret himself would have ventured to do. The active and able Sovereign of Prussia received such pecuniary assistance as enabled him to maintain the conflict on equal terms against his powerful enemies. On no subject had Pitt ever

spoken with so much eloquence and ardour as on the 1  
 mischiefs of the Hanoverian connection. He now  
 declared, not without much show of reason, that it  
 would be unworthy of the English people to suffer their  
 King to be deprived of his electoral dominions in an  
 English quarrel. He assured his countrymen that they  
 should be no losers, and that he would conquer  
 America for them in Germany. By taking this line  
 he conciliated the King, and lost no part of his  
 influence with the nation. In Parliament, such was 10  
 the ascendancy which his eloquence, his success, his  
 high situation, his pride, and his intrepidity had  
 obtained for him, that he took liberties with the  
 House of which there had been no example, and which  
 have never since been imitated. No orator could  
 there venture to reproach him with inconsistency.  
 One unfortunate man made the attempt, and was so  
 much disconcerted by the scornful demeanour of the  
 Minister that he stammered, stopped, and sat down.  
 Even the old Tory country gentlemen, to whom the very 20  
 name of Hanover had been odious, gave their hearty  
 Ayes to subsidy after subsidy. In a lively contemporary  
 satire, much more lively indeed than delicate, this  
 remarkable conversion is not unhappily described.

“No more they make a fiddle-faddle  
 About a Hessian horse or saddle.  
 No more of continental measures;  
 No more of wasting British treasures.  
 Ten millions, and a vote of credit,  
 'Tis right. He can't be wrong who did it.” 30

§ 90. The success of Pitt's continental measures  
 was such as might have been expected from their  
 vigour. When he came into power, Hanover was in  
 imminent danger; and before he had been in office  
 three months, the whole electorate was in the hands

- 1 of France. But the face of affairs was speedily changed. The invaders were driven out. An army, partly English, partly Hanoverian, partly composed of soldiers furnished by the petty princes of Germany, was placed under the command of Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick. The French were beaten in 1758 at Crevelt. In 1759 they received a still more complete and humiliating defeat at Minden.

§ 91. In the meantime, the nation exhibited all the  
10 signs of wealth and prosperity. The merchants of London had never been more thriving. The importance of several great commercial and manufacturing towns, of Glasgow in particular, dates from this period. The fine inscription on the monument of Lord Chatham in Guildhall records the general opinion of the citizens of London, that under his administration commerce had been "united with and made to flourish by war".

§ 92. It must be owned that these signs of pros-  
20 perity were in some degree delusive. It must be owned that some of our conquests were rather splendid than useful. It must be owned that the expense of the war never entered into Pitt's consideration. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the cost of his victories increased the pleasure with which he contemplated them. Unlike other men in his situation, he loved to exaggerate the sums which the nation was laying out under his direction. He was proud of the sacrifices and efforts which his eloquence and his  
30 success had induced his countrymen to make. The price at which he purchased faithful service and complete victory, though far smaller than that which his son, the most profuse and incapable of war ministers, paid for treachery, defeat, and shame, was long and severely felt by the nation.

§ 93. Even as a war minister, Pitt is scarcely 1  
entitled to all the praise which his contemporaries  
lavished on him. We, perhaps from ignorance, can-  
not discern in his arrangements any appearance of  
profound or dexterous combination. Several of his  
expeditions, particularly those which were sent to the  
coast of France, were at once costly and absurd.  
Our Indian conquests, though they add to the splen-  
dour of the period during which he was at the head  
of affairs, were not planned by him. He had un- 10  
doubtedly great energy, great determination, great  
means at his command. His temper was enterprising;  
and, situated as he was, he had only to follow his  
temper. The wealth of a rich nation, the valour of a  
brave nation, were ready to support him in every  
attempt.

§ 94. In one respect, however, he deserved all the  
praise that he has ever received. The success of our  
arms was perhaps owing less to the skill of his dis-  
positions than to the national resources and the 20  
national spirit. But that the national spirit rose to  
the emergency, that the national resources were con-  
tributed with unexampled cheerfulness, this was un-  
doubtedly his work. The ardour of his soul had set  
the whole kingdom on fire. It inflamed every soldier  
who dragged the cannon up the heights of Quebec,  
and every sailor who boarded the French ships among  
the rocks of Brittany. The Minister, before he had  
been long in office, had imparted to the commanders  
whom he employed, his own impetuous, adventurous, 30  
and defying character. They, like him, were disposed  
to risk everything, to play double or quits to the last,  
to think nothing done while anything remained un-  
done, to fail rather than not to attempt. For the  
errors of rashness there might be indulgence. For

- 1 over-caution, for faults like those of Lord George Sackville, there was no mercy. In other times, and against other enemies, this mode of warfare might have failed. But the state of the French government and of the French nation gave every advantage to Pitt. The fops and intriguers of Versailles were appalled and bewildered by his vigour. A panic spread through all ranks of society. Our enemies soon considered it as a settled thing that they were  
10 always to be beaten. Thus victory begot victory; till, at last, wherever the forces of the two nations met, they met with disdainful confidence on one side, and with a craven fear on the other.

- § 95. The situation which Pitt occupied at the close of the reign of George the Second was the most enviable ever occupied by any public man in English history. He had conciliated the King; he domineered over the House of Commons; he was adored by the people; he was admired by all Europe. He was the  
20 first Englishman of his time; and he had made England the first country in the world. The Great Commoner, the name by which he was often designated, might look down with scorn on coronets and garters. The nation was drunk with joy and pride. The Parliament was as quiet as it had been under Pelham. The old party distinctions were almost effaced; nor was their place yet supplied by distinctions of a still more important kind. A new generation of country squires and rectors had arisen who knew  
30 not the Stuarts. The Dissenters were tolerated; the Catholics not cruelly persecuted. The Church was drowsy and indulgent. The great civil and religious conflict which began at the Reformation seemed to have terminated in universal repose. Whigs and Tories, Churchmen and Puritans, spoke with equal

reverence of the Constitution, and with equal enthusiasm of the talents, virtues, and services of the Minister. 1

§ 96. A few years sufficed to change the whole aspect of affairs. A nation convulsed by faction, a throne assailed by the fiercest invective, a House of Commons hated and despised by the nation, England set against Scotland, Britain set against America, a rival legislature sitting beyond the Atlantic, English blood shed by English bayonets, our armies capitulating, our conquests wrested from us, our enemies hastening to take vengeance for past humiliation, our flag scarcely able to maintain itself in our own seas, such was the spectacle which Pitt lived to see. But the history of this great revolution requires far more space than we can at present bestow. We leave the Great Commoner in the zenith of his glory. It is not impossible that we may take some other opportunity of tracing his life to its melancholy, yet not inglorious close. 10 20



## NOTES

**page 1. Thackeray's Life of Pitt.** Francis Thackeray, author of the work which is reviewed in this Essay, was uncle of the famous novelist, W. M. Thackeray. He was an English Church clergyman. His *Life of Pitt*, though open to the charge of excessive hero-worship, is generally considered accurate and well-informed. Both Lecky and Green refer to it as an authority.

### § 1

**1. 1. several years.** This Essay appeared in the *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1834. Thackeray's work had come out in 1827.

**1. 6. State Paper Office.** This building was pulled down in 1854, and its contents were transferred to the Record Office. The State Papers, which extend in an unbroken series from the time of Henry VIII to the present, consist for the most part of reports prepared for the leading ministers of the crown on domestic and foreign affairs.

**1. 8. Gifford's or Tomline's Life of the second Pitt.** William Pitt, the second son of the first Earl of Chatham, became Prime Minister in 1783 at the age of twenty-four, and, except for an interval of three years, remained at the head of affairs till his death in 1806. Of Gifford's *Life* nothing need be said. Tomline's *Life* should have been better than it is, for Tomline, who had been Pitt's tutor, acted as his private secretary from 1782 to 1787, and consequently enjoyed excellent opportunities of studying his subject.

**1. 10. Parliamentary History.** The predecessor of *Hansard's Parliamentary Debates*, which began in 1803.

**1. 11. The Annual Register** first appeared in 1758. Its sub-title, *A Review of the History, Politics, and Literature of the Year*, gives a good notion of its contents. The historical portion is said to have been written by Burke for many years.

## § 2

**page 2, l. 3. Lues Boswelliana**, 'the Boswellian plague', by which Macaulay means the idolatrous reverence which some biographers manifest for their heroes. Elsewhere he uses 'Boswellism' and 'furor biographicus' to express this fault. Boswell was certainly an enthusiastic devotee of Dr. Johnson's, but it was not his devotion only that enabled him to produce the famous biography. Judgment in the selection of characteristic circumstances, and dramatic ability in reporting conversations, are two of Boswell's qualifications which Macaulay unjustly ignores in his Essay on Dr. Johnson.

**l. 10. In spite of gods, men, and columns.** The reference is to Horace's *De Arte Poetica*, 372-373:

"mediocribus esse poetis

Non homines, non di, non concessere columnae";

that is, 'neither gods, nor men, nor booksellers' stalls have any toleration for middling poets'.

**l. 21. cornet**, the officer who carried the colours in a troop of cavalry.

**l. 24. in esse**, in reality; **in posse**, in possibility.

**l. 27. establish an inquisition, &c.** At the time of Walpole's fall (1742) Pitt spoke strongly in favour of an enquiry into his conduct, and even supported the Bill of Indemnity. See § 36.

**l. 30. declared Walpole to have been an excellent minister.** "No one", writes Coxe in his *Life of Sir Robert Walpole*, "can suspect Pitt of paying a tribute of applause to his memory from mean and adulatory motives; yet even he observed in the House of Commons that Sir Robert Walpole was a very able minister. Perceiving several members laugh, he added, 'The more I reflect on my conduct, the more I blame myself for opposing the Excise Bill', and concluded by saying, with his usual energy: 'Let those who are ashamed to confess their errors laugh out. Can it be deemed adulation to praise a minister who is no more?' The whole House seemed abashed, and became silent."

**l. 32. no peace ought to be made with Spain, &c.** By the treaty of Utrecht (1713) Spain conceded to England the annual privilege of importing a certain number of slaves into the Spanish-American colonies, and of sending one trading vessel to Panama. The trade proved very lucrative, and the English in their desire of further gain broke the terms of the

treaty and took to smuggling. The Spaniards then exercised the right of search, a right which every nation is entitled to exercise within its own waters. But the English would hear of no such right. They continued to smuggle, and the Spaniards naturally continued to search. English sailors complained that their ships were boarded even on the high seas. Tales of Spanish insolence and cruelty were in constant circulation. The story of Jenkins' ear is well known. Feeling in England rapidly rose to fever-pitch, and Walpole, much against his better judgment, was compelled to declare war with Spain (1739). Pitt, who on this occasion was one of the foremost to denounce the Spanish right of search, made no objection to the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), in which the Spanish claim was tacitly admitted.

page 3, l. 3. *left the Duke of Newcastle, &c.* Pitt may be said to have *left* the duke in 1755, because he took up such a hostile position on the question of the Russian and Hessian subsidies that the duke's dismissal of him followed as a mere matter of form. In the next year Pitt became Secretary of State under the nominal leadership of the Duke of Devonshire. The new ministry, however, soon fell owing to lack of that parliamentary support which Newcastle could always command. To secure this support Pitt consented to ally himself once more with Newcastle (1757).

l. 5. *subsidies*, sums of money granted to foreign states for the hire or for the maintenance of their armies. Among the states thus subsidized were Russia, Prussia, Hesse, and Sardinia. Pitt rightly objected to this method of protecting British interests. He believed in developing and strengthening our own military resources. He passed a bill for the reorganization of our national militia, and even dared to raise regiments from the Highlanders who in 1745 had fought on behalf of the Stuarts. But in spite of his efforts to increase our army, in spite, too, of his detestation of mercenary troops, he was himself compelled to pay foreign princes for their help, and in 1758 he undertook to supply Frederick of Prussia with an annual subsidy of £670,000.

l. 7. *Hanoverian connection*. Hanover belonged to the English crown from the accession of George I to the death of William IV. It then passed to Ernest Augustus, Duke of Cumberland, because, by the Salic law, no woman can succeed to the throne of Hanover. This separation proved a great benefit to England, as the necessity of defending Hanover whenever we were at war with a continental power was a considerable drain on our resources. The subsidies mentioned in the last note were spent mainly in the defence of Hanover. Pitt, as we have seen, spoke strongly against them. Strangely

enough, his first ministerial speech after he had taken office under Newcastle in 1757 embodied a message from the king desiring support for his electoral dominions. This change of face was brought about by Pitt's anxiety to secure the king's good-will as one means of maintaining himself in power. He saw, too, that while the king would be delighted with this attention to the interests of Hanover, the King of Prussia would be able with the help of English money to keep the French so well employed that they would not be in a position to send additional troops to contend with ours in America. As Pitt himself said, he would conquer America in Germany.

#### § 4

1. 14. **complete and well-proportioned greatness.** This is a sentiment thoroughly characteristic of Macaulay. Temperate and consistent himself, he admired men of like nature, such as Hampden and Somers, whom he seems here to rate higher than the impetuous and inconsistent Pitt. But the general verdict of historians is against him in this matter. Notwithstanding his defects, Pitt was a greater man, and did more for his country, than either Hampden or Somers.

1. 15. **Hampden.** John Hampden, the representative of an old Buckinghamshire family, was one of the most striking figures in the struggle between Charles I and his people. His public career was an unflinching opposition to the arbitrary actions of the king. In 1627 he was imprisoned for refusing to contribute to a forced loan levied by Charles without the consent of his Parliament. Ten years later he resisted the levy of ship-money. In 1642 the king tried to arrest him, together with four other members of the House. Soon after this the Civil War broke out. Hampden raised a troop of horse, and showed himself as energetic in war as he had previously been in debate. But he was not destined to witness the final triumph of his cause. In 1643 he was mortally wounded in a small cavalry engagement with Prince Rupert at Chalgrove Field, and died six days afterwards, uttering with his last breath a prayer for the welfare of his country. Macaulay always regards Hampden with pious reverence as one of the great founders of the Whig party, and has devoted an essay to a study of his life and character. For another brief reference to Hampden see § 20 of this Essay.

**Somers.** John Somers, the son of a Worcester lawyer, was born in 1651. He was sent to the bar, where his abilities soon attracted attention. He acted as junior counsel for the defence of the Seven Bishops in 1688; as member for Worcester he distinguished himself in the parliamentary debates of 1689, taking the position that James's flight was tantamount

to an abdication; he served also on the two committees which drew up the Declaration of Right. Under William III he was naturally the recipient of many honours, the highest being the Lord-Chancellorship in 1697. The jealous Tories, gradually recovering their strength, now became so violent in their attacks on Somers that the king was obliged to dismiss him from office. The House of Commons next resolved to impeach him. The chief charge against him was that, when William III was negotiating the Partition Treaties for the division of the Spanish dominions, Somers sent him the necessary powers in blank under the great seal without consulting the lords-justices or the Privy Council. Owing to a wrangle on procedure between the Lords and Commons the impeachment fell through. In Queen Anne's reign Somers came once more to the front, and was for many years President of the Council. He died in 1716. Macaulay, who in several passages has recorded his high admiration of Somers, seems to have overestimated somewhat the services which he rendered to the cause of English liberty. "To Burke, Somers was the type of 'the old Whigs' to whom was addressed the famous 'Appeal'; to Macaulay he was no less a symbol of awe and veneration. Yet as a statesman he does not merit all the praise which has been bestowed upon him by his Whig panegyrists. His part in shaping the settlement of 1688-1689 has been unduly magnified; in the matter of the partition treaty he showed a lamentable want of firmness; notwithstanding his latitudinarian opinions, he does not seem to have been particularly zealous even for the small measure of religious liberty secured by the Toleration Act. On the other hand, his sagacity, industry, and disinterestedness are undeniable." (J. M. Rigg, in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, art. "Somers".)

1. 26. **pride and resentment.** Perhaps the worst exhibition of these defects of character occurred when Pitt allowed the people to cheer him at Guildhall, while the king passed almost unnoticed, and Bute, then Prime Minister, was hooted. Pitt owned afterwards that he had done wrong.

1. 32. **in the Closet**, in private interview with the king.

**page 4, l. 5. Rembrandt-like effect.** The celebrated Dutch painter, Rembrandt, was a master of light and shade. In his pictures the principal object often stands out with startling clearness, as though illuminated by a descending ray of light, while the surrounding parts are left in dense gloom.

1. 8. **Belisarius**, a great general in the time of the Emperor Justinian, fought with success against the Persians, the Vandals, the Goths, and the Bulgarians; but his achievements excited the jealousy of the courtiers at Constantinople, and even of the emperor himself. On a charge of conspiracy he

was deprived of his fortune and confined to his palace. He died in 565. Tradition, however, asserts that he was blinded, and reduced to such poverty that he used to stand in the streets, begging and crying out, "Date obolum Belisario". So touching and dramatic an incident has naturally been a favourite theme with painters, poets, and writers of romance. Belisarius is often represented holding a long staff, as in the illustrations to the English translation (1768) of Marmontel's *Belisaire*.

1. 8. **Lear.** Though Shakespeare makes no mention of King Lear's crutch in his play, several of our best actors, David Garrick among them, have thought a crutch necessary to the part.

## § 5

1. 14. **tergiversation**, shuffling, evasive conduct (Lat. *tergiversari*, to turn one's back).

1. 16. **Wordsworth.** The lines quoted are from the *Excursion*, book ii. 286-288.

1. 20. **prostitution**, selling one's political influence for money or some other consideration.

1. 21. **Dodington.** George Bubb Dodington, the representative of a very wealthy Somersetshire family, had one fixed ambition. He meant to die a peer. With this object he changed from one political party to another throughout his life. After paying court to Walpole, the Duke of Argyll, Prince Frederick, Henry Pelham, the Duke of Newcastle, and the Princess Dowager, he ingratiated himself with the Earl of Bute, and by his good offices was raised to the peerage in 1761 as Lord Melcombe. In the next year he died. Though rightly despised as a time-serving politician, he has a claim to remembrance as a wit, a scholar, and a patron of literary men, among whom may be mentioned Young, Thomson, Fielding, and Bentley.

**Sandys.** Samuel Sandys, afterwards Lord Sandys, was a persistent opponent of Walpole's. Under Wilmington he took office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, and straightway abandoned his previous political opinions. He even went so far as to speak against the Place Bill which he had already twice championed in the House. The servility and selfishness of his nature were not redeemed, as was the case with Dodington, by any amiable qualities. Horace Walpole says of him that he never laughed but once, and that was when his best friend broke his thigh.

**page 5, l. 4. the Pelhams.** Henry Pelham and his brother, the Duke of Newcastle, were connected by marriage with Sir Robert Walpole, Lord Townshend, and Charles Spencer, Earl of Sunderland. From 1743 to 1754 Henry Pelham was Prime

Minister, and his brother Secretary of State. When Henry Pelham died, the Duke of Newcastle stepped into his place, and except for a brief interval remained in it up to 1762. The King made a futile effort to get rid of the brothers in 1746; Pitt and Devonshire in 1756-1757 tried vainly to carry on the work of government without Newcastle's assistance. The ties of blood, the command of pocket-boroughs, ample private wealth, and a lavish use of secret-service money had made the Pelham interest supreme in the House.

1. 5. **Bute.** John Stuart, Earl of Bute, was attached to the household of George III while the latter was still Prince of Wales. He had great influence with the Princess Dowager, and is generally supposed to have been responsible for the political education of the young Prince. "His Majesty", wrote Horace Walpole, "had learned nothing but what a man who knew nothing could teach him." The man who knew nothing was Bute. In 1760 George III came to the throne. In 1761 Bute was made Secretary of State; in the following year Prime Minister. In 1763 he retired, frightened at his own unpopularity. As he had enjoyed no practical experience of politics before 1760, his elevation to power must be regarded as due solely to royal favour.

1. 9. **oligarchy**, a form of government in which the chief power rests with a few men only; also used, as here, for the few men who possess the chief power.

## § 6

1. 17. **Governor of Madras.** Thomas Pitt, son of the Rev. John Pitt, rector of Blandford St. Mary in Dorset, was a man of remarkable energy and business ability. He engaged as an interloper in the East India trade, and made a fortune by underselling the factors of the East India Company. After several endeavours to suppress him, the company came to terms and appointed him in 1698 to the governorship of Madras, a post which he filled with great distinction. Thomas Pitt bought the celebrated diamond from a native called Jamchund, who, in his turn, had bought it from an English skipper. The skipper had stolen it from a slave. Pitt gave £20,400 for the stone, and sold it for £135,000. Pope gives the following unjust version of this affair:—

"Asleep and naked as an Indian lay,  
An honest factor stole a gem away;  
He pledged it to the knight; the knight had wit,  
So kept the diamond, and the rogue was bit".

The last four words are said to have stood originally, 'grew rich as Pitt'.

1. 19. **Regent Orleans.** When Louis XIV died in 1715, Philip, Duke of Orleans, was appointed Regent, the heir to the throne being a child of five years. The Regent was a man of undoubted ability, but of loose morality both in public and private life. His Regency came to an end in 1723, when Louis XV was declared of age.

**Saint Simon.** The Duc de Saint Simon was a great friend of the Duke of Orleans. His *Mémoires* abound in lively anecdotes of court life in the times of Louis XIV and the Regent.

1. 23. **rotten boroughs.** These were boroughs which, though they had little or no population, still retained the privilege of electing members of Parliament. Old Sarum, which was the abandoned site of the first city of Salisbury, was a striking example of a rotten borough. From the time of Henry VIII it had been without inhabitants. In order to qualify themselves for giving a vote, the electors at election times used to go through the farce of erecting and dwelling in a temporary house within the limits of old Sarum. There were seven such electors in 1794 according to the Royal Kalendar for that year, and they had the right of returning two members. The electors of Oakhampton, a sleepy little market-town in Devon, enjoyed a similar right. As these rotten boroughs were always willing to sell their votes, and as some rich men, desirous of parliamentary interest, were always willing to buy, a flourishing trade, mainly conducted by a class of agents called 'borough-brokers', sprang into existence. The 'Nabobs', or men who had made fortunes in India, of whom Thomas Pitt was one, were among the readiest purchasers. By the Reform Act of 1832 these rotten boroughs, fifty-six in number, were deprived of their electoral privileges.

## § 7

page 6, l. 11. **Mars**, god of war. Before his accession to the English throne, George I had taken part in campaigns against the Turks, the French, and the Danes.

**Themis**, goddess of justice.

**Neptune**, god of the sea.

**Cocytus**, the river of lamentation in the world of departed spirits.

1. 12. **Muses.** The Muses, so often invoked by Greek and Latin poets, were the patron-goddesses of literature and the fine arts. They could hardly be expected to mourn for George I, who had a great contempt for what his equally contemptuous successor called 'boetry and bainting'.



l. 13. **Cæsar**, the title by which a Roman poet would have addressed a Roman emperor, and so here transferred to our English king by Pitt when writing in the Roman manner.

l. 14. **Pope**. Alexander Pope, the author of *The Dunciad*, *The Rape of the Lock*, and *The Essay on Man*, was the leading poet of George I's time. He is here mentioned as representative of literature in general.

l. 15. **punch**, so called because it consists of five ingredients, viz. spirit, water, lemon-juice, sugar, and spice. The word is from the Hindi *panch*, five.

**fat women**. One of his favourites, the Countess of Darlington, was so stout that she was nicknamed the Elephant; but another favourite, the Duchess of Kendal, was long and lean. She was called the Maypole.

## § 8

l. 19. **visited France and Italy**. This journey, generally known as the *grand tour*, had been common with young Englishmen of culture since the days of the Renaissance. The practice originated in the desire to learn Greek at first hand from the Greeks who found a refuge in Italy when Constantinople was taken by the Turks. As the travellers unfortunately got the reputation of acquiring more vice than learning, they came under the lash of our native satirists. Cowper in his *Progress of Error* protests against this method of education, and concludes with the following familiar lines:—

“Returning, he proclaims by many a grace,  
By shrugs and strange contortions of his face,  
How much a dunce that has been sent to roam  
Excels a dunce that has been kept at home”.

## § 9

l. 28. **the Blues**. The original Blues, so called from the colour of their coats and cloaks, were one of the cavalry regiments in the standing army collected by Charles II.

## § 11

**page 7, l. 3. Walpole**. Sir Robert Walpole, of an old Norfolk family, was born at Houghton in that county in the year 1676. In 1700 he entered Parliament. He was a strong supporter of the Protestant Succession, and soon made his mark as an able debater and a shrewd politician. Under Queen Anne he was for a time Secretary at War. In the early

years of George I he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the machinations of Sunderland drove him from office in 1717. At length in 1721 his great chance came. The ability which he displayed in dealing with the affairs of the South Sea Company raised him to the head of his party, and for the next twenty years he was the virtual ruler of England. His good and bad qualities are well contrasted by Thackeray in *The Four Georges*: "But for his obstinate love of peace, we should have had wars, which the nation was not strong enough nor united enough to endure. But for his resolute counsels and good-humoured resistance, we might have had German despots attempting a Hanoverian regimen over us; we should have had revolt, commotion, want, and tyrannous misrule, in place of a quarter of a century of peace, freedom, and material prosperity, such as the country never enjoyed, until that corrupter of parliaments, that dissolute tipsy cynic, that courageous lover of peace and liberty, that great citizen, patriot, and statesman governed it."

**1. 7. principles of the Revolution.** These principles were enunciated in the Bill of Rights (1689), which aimed at curtailing the arbitrary power of the king and safeguarding the liberty of the subject. At the same time it provided that no Roman Catholic should succeed to the English throne. This bill, which paved the way for the coming of the Georges, was the work of the Whigs. Moreover, when Anne died in 1714, it was by the action of certain Whigs that George I was secured in the possession of the crown. Very naturally, then, the first two kings of the House of Brunswick gave their confidence to the Whig party.

**1. 11. South Sea Act.** The South Sea Company was formed in 1711 for the purpose of carrying on trade with the Spanish colonies in South America. The profits were expected to be so enormous that people eagerly bought shares. Meanwhile, politicians were alarmed at the size of the National Debt, and when the South Sea Company, desiring an increase of capital, proposed to take over a large portion of the Debt, the proposal was accepted. In 1720 a bill was passed, enabling those who had lent money to the government to turn their stock into South Sea shares. There was no compulsion, but numbers gladly availed themselves of the arrangement. Then followed the fever of speculation described in the text. When the crash came, Walpole saved the credit of the South Sea Company by assigning nine millions of its stock to the Bank of England, a like sum to the East India Company, and leaving twenty millions with the South Sea Company itself. A different distribution of the liabilities, however, was afterwards carried into effect.

1. 18. **Threadneedle Street**, in the City of London, and close to the Bank of England, has long been associated with financiers and company-promoters.

**page 8, l. 1. parricides in ancient Rome** were tied up in a sack together with an ape and a snake, and flung into the Tiber.

1. 5. **Sunderland.** Charles Spencer, third Earl of Sunderland (1674-1722), was a pronounced Whig and supporter of the Hanoverian succession. For nearly four years he had been Secretary of State in Anne's reign. When George I came to the throne, Sunderland was somewhat overlooked, while Townshend, Stanhope, and Walpole secured the confidence of the king. But Sunderland by degrees managed to ingratiate himself with Stanhope and the king, and in 1717 Townshend and Walpole were driven from office. In 1718 Sunderland became the head of the ministry. As such he was largely responsible for the South Sea Act of 1720. During the parliamentary enquiry of 1721 into the affairs of the company he was accused of having received a bribe of £50,000 worth of fictitious stock for which he paid nothing. The evidence against him was not thoroughly satisfactory, depending, as it did, on the word of a fraudulent director. With great adroitness Walpole contrived to bring about his acquittal, but the people persisted in believing in his guilt, and he was forced to resign his position. He died in the following year.

**Stanhope.** James, first Earl Stanhope (1673-1721), belonged to a family of which many members have distinguished themselves in the service of the state. As a soldier, he fought under William III in Flanders and under Peterborough in Spain. In 1708 he was appointed commander-in-chief of the British forces in Spain, and immediately undertook and accomplished the capture of Minorca. In 1710 his military career came to an end and his political career began. A devoted Whig, he had his reward in the favour shown him by George I, being one of his most trusted ministers from the date of his accession to the year of the South Sea crisis. Like the other members of Sunderland's government, he was accused of receiving a bribe from the South Sea Company. While rebutting this accusation, which in his case was untrue, he spoke with such energy that he burst a blood-vessel. He died on the following day. He had married Lucy, the daughter of Governor Pitt, and so was uncle by marriage to the famous William Pitt, the subject of Macaulay's Essay.

1. 7. **Craggs.** James Craggs, a young politician of great ability, was appointed Secretary of State in 1718 when Sunderland became chief minister. He died of small-pox, which was very prevalent in the South Sea year. In connection with the

affairs of the company, there is but little evidence of financial misconduct against him. At most he suggested that a bribe should be given to the Duchess of Kendal, one of George's favourites. Pope, a warm friend and admirer of Craggs, wrote the following epitaph for his tomb in Westminster Abbey:—

“Statesman, yet friend to truth! of soul sincere,  
In action faithful, and in honour clear!  
Who broke no promise, served no private end,  
Who gained no title, and who lost no friend;  
Ennobled by himself, by all approved,  
Praised, wept, and honour'd by the Muse he loved”.

Craggs' father, who was deeply implicated in the South Sea frauds and condemned to pay a heavy fine, died of grief at the loss of his talented son.

1. 7. **Aislabie.** John Aislabie (1670–1742), a Yorkshire gentleman, was the owner of Studley Royal, which has descended by a collateral line to the present Marquis of Ripon. In 1718 Sunderland raised him to the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer. There is no doubt whatever of Aislabie's guilt in the matter of the South Sea Company. He is said to have made nearly £800,000. When the storm began, he resigned office. The Parliamentary Committee of Inquiry found him guilty of ‘most notorious, dangerous, and infamous corruption’, expelled him from the House, and condemned him to lose all his gains from October 20th, 1718, onward. He spent the rest of his life in retirement on his Yorkshire property.

1. 16. **schism which had divided the Whig party**, that is, between Townshend, Walpole, Pulteney, &c., on the one hand, and Sunderland, Stanhope, &c., on the other.

## § 12

1. 26. **the course which Pelham afterwards took.** Henry Pelham's administration (1743–1754) went by the nickname of the “Broad Bottom”, because it included politicians of nearly every sort.

## § 13

**page 9, l. 3. Pulteney.** William Pulteney, Earl of Bath (1682–1764), came of a family which had already won distinction in Parliament. He was a man of great wealth, having got one fortune from his father, another from his guardian, and a third by marriage. At first he was a close ally of Walpole, taking office together with him in 1714, and resigning when Walpole was compelled to resign by the machinations of Sunderland in 1717. Walpole, however, offered him no important post in 1721. Again, when the Secretaryship of State fell

vacant in 1724, Walpole passed him over. Pulteney was so deeply chagrined that he entered into opposition and devoted himself to the task of upsetting Walpole's power. In conjunction with Bolingbroke he started *The Craftsman*, a journal which decried every action of the government. It was chiefly owing to Pulteney's denunciations and misrepresentations that the Excise Bill was dropped. A few years later he stirred up the general clamour that drove Walpole to declare war with Spain. When at length Walpole fell from power, Pulteney was the most popular man in England. Everyone looked to him to redress the abuses which he had so long exposed. But his courage or his ability failed him, and, after naming a ministry which gave much dissatisfaction, he withdrew as Earl of Bath into the Upper House. "Here we are, my lord," said Walpole, now Lord Orford, "the two most insignificant men in the kingdom." Though he was called upon to construct a ministry in 1746, when the Pelhams had resigned to frighten the king into admitting Pitt to office, he was obliged to relinquish the attempt. After this, he took but little part in politics, and gave himself up instead to the increase of his wealth. His great achievement was the driving of Walpole from power; his great error, the refusal to step into his place.

## § 14

1. 23. **Carteret.** John Carteret, Earl Granville (1690-1763), was admitted to be the most brilliant public man of his day. He was a profound scholar, a great orator, an able debater, a man of large views and boundless ambition. His knowledge of the German language and of German politics made him very acceptable to the first two Georges. He succeeded Craggs as Secretary of State in 1721, but, daring to plot the overthrow of Walpole, he was sent into virtual banishment as lord-lieutenant of Ireland. On his return to England he joined Pulteney and the opposition. After Walpole's fall he became once more Secretary of State, and was in all but name the leading minister of the Wilmington administration. Unfortunately for the stability of his position he devoted himself entirely to continental politics, and neglected the arts by which a parliamentary interest is created and maintained. Place-giving and bribery he contemptuously abandoned to the Pelhams, with the result that the Pelhams made themselves strong enough to oust him from power when Wilmington died in 1743. Three years later he was asked to form a ministry, but he had to confess his inability to do so. The corrupt politicians of the day refused to rally round one who scorned the drudgery of corrupting them. For a clever sketch of his character and abilities the student is referred to Macaulay's Essay on "Walpole's Letters to Sir Horace Mann".

## § 15

1. 34. **Townshend.** Charles Townshend, second Lord Townshend (1676-1738), was of an old family which had been settled at Rainham in Norfolk since the middle of the fifteenth century. When Townshend and Walpole came into power in 1714, Townshend was the leader. In 1721 he was Walpole's subordinate. This alteration of their relative positions was no doubt distasteful to Townshend. Again, when George II came to the throne, Townshend, though a great favourite with the king, was beaten in all points of difference by Walpole, who overruled the king through Queen Caroline. Thus an estrangement grew up between the brothers-in-law, which increased until the open quarrel, described by Macaulay, took place. After his retirement Townshend devoted himself to country pursuits, and was the first to introduce into England the regular cultivation of turnips on a large scale. As a politician he was able and honest, but he had no tact and little self-control. His speeches, though sensible, were tedious, and so ungrammatical that the younger members of the House found in them a never-failing source of amusement.

page 10, 1. 4. **Godolphin.** Sidney Godolphin, Earl of Godolphin (1645-1712), a member of an ancient Cornish family, held office under Charles II, James II, William III, and Anne. He began his political career as a Tory, but gradually changed to a Whig. It was after this conversion that he admitted Walpole and Townshend to office. The victories of Marlborough and the Union of England with Scotland are the chief glories of his administration. In 1710 the intrigues of Harley drove him from power. He survived his retirement two years. Godolphin's modesty and usefulness were well hit off by that shrewd observer, Charles II. "Little Sidney Godolphin", he said, "is never in the way and never out of the way."

1. 5. **Harley.** Robert Harley, first Earl of Oxford (1661-1724), belonged to a distinguished Herefordshire family. He and Henry St. John (Lord Bolingbroke) were the leading Tories of Queen Anne's reign. Their administration, which began in 1710, after the fall of Godolphin, and lasted up to the time of the queen's death, is now chiefly remembered for the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). The pleasantest trait in Harley's character is his kindly feeling towards literary men, such, for instance, as Pope, Congreve, and Dean Swift.

1. 6. **persecuted by the same House of Commons.** When the Tories under Harley and St. John had turned out the Whigs in 1710 they proceeded to charge the ex-ministers with bribery and peculation. Sir Robert Walpole, after ably defending his colleagues, was himself declared guilty of notorious

corruption, sent to the Tower, and expelled the House. He was, however, generally regarded as a martyr.

## § 16

**page 11, l. 4. Chesterfield.** Philip Dormer Stanhope, fourth Earl of Chesterfield (1694-1773), played a considerable part in the politics of his day. As our ambassador to Holland, and as Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, he won golden opinions by his tact and moderation. In the House of Lords he was a witty and eloquent debater. After his removal from the Lord-stewardship in 1733, he joined Pulteney, and even wrote for *The Craftsman*. He is now chiefly remembered for his *Letters to his Son*, where much wisdom is mingled with much immorality, and by the famous epistle in which Dr. Johnson took his revenge for the hours of fruitless waiting spent in his lordship's anteroom.

**l. 5. Protestant succession.** The Act of Settlement (1701) provided that the English crown after Anne's death should go to the Electress Sophia and her Protestant descendants, that is, to the kings of Hanover.

**l. 11. Excise Bill.** In order to escape customs duty, which is levied at the time and place of landing, tobacco was smuggled to an enormous extent. The public revenue was thus defrauded. Walpole proposed (1733) that imported tobacco should be stored free of duty in government warehouses, and that duty should not be paid until the tobacco was removed for the purpose of sale; further, that tobacco should be sold in licensed houses only. By these regulations smuggling would have been considerably checked, and the public revenue proportionately increased. At the same time the honest trader would have been in less danger of being undersold by the dishonest smuggler. The bill was essentially just, but Bolingbroke and Pulteney managed to excite a furious tempest of opposition. They persuaded the people that Walpole desired to rob them of their favourite luxury by raising its price, and that the excisemen employed in seeing that the new regulations were observed would form an army of political spies ever ready to search private premises at Walpole's command. With a political expediency resembling that of Elizabeth in the matter of monopolies, Walpole withdrew his bill; but, though he yielded to the nation, he did not yield to those of his colleagues who had joined in opposing him. They were ruthlessly turned out of their places.

**l. 18. St. James's,** an old royal palace in London, is now used only for levees, drawing-rooms, and state balls.

## § 17

1. 26. **Duke of Argyle.** John Campbell, second Duke of Argyle (1678-1743), rendered great services both to his country and the Whig party. He went through four of Marlborough's campaigns in Flanders, was commander-in-chief of the English forces in Spain in the year 1711, and repressed the Jacobite rebellion of 1715. He did much to bring about the union of England and Scotland, and together with the Dukes of Shrewsbury and Somerset he prevented Bolingbroke from calling in the Pretender at the time of Queen Anne's death, and thus secured the execution of the Act of Settlement (see note on § 16). He showed his fickleness by deserting the Whigs to take the command in Spain during a Tory administration, and then going back to the Whigs on his return from the Continent.

## § 18

page 12, l. 4. all the footsteps are turned the same way, an allusion to Æsop's well-known fable. The sick lion invited the fox to visit him in his cave; but the fox refused, because the footsteps of previous visitors were all in one direction only, namely, towards the lion, and not from him.

1. 10. **his son.** There were two Horace Walpoles, one the son, the other the brother, of the famous Sir Robert. Horace Walpole, the son (1717-1797), differed much from his father, inclining to literature and art rather than to politics. He has the credit of beginning a new style of romance with his *Castle of Otranto*, and his private letters, covering a period of more than sixty years, are among the wittiest and most entertaining letters in the language. His *Memoirs of the Reign of King George the Second*, from which the quotation in the text is taken, are very freely laid under contribution by Macaulay in this Essay. In justification of his father's treatment of colleagues Horace Walpole says that "his apprehension of competitors was founded on prudence, because great part of his authority depended on the king's favour".

1. 12. **Hume.** David Hume (1711-1776), the famous Scotch philosopher and historian, wrote an English history concluding with the Revolution. It was supplemented by the work of Smollett, the novelist. For a long time it was regarded as the standard history of England, but it has now been superseded by works of more accurate research and sounder critical method.

1. 21. **Horace.** This Horace Walpole was the brother of Sir Robert. He was a busy politician of no particular ability. His nephew says that he was a 'dead weight' on Sir Robert's



ministry, and sums up his character in these words: "His mind was a strange mixture of sense alloyed by absurdity, wit by mimicry, knowledge by buffoonery, bravery by meanness, honesty by selfishness, impertinence by nothing".

1. 21. **Henry Pelham.** "A man of some sense without parts" is one of the verdicts passed upon him by Horace Walpole, the younger.

1. 25. **Fox.** Henry Fox (1705-1774), first Lord Holland and son of Sir Stephen Fox, was a contemporary of Pitt's at Eton. His character and career are so fully treated by Macaulay that there is no need to sketch them here. The following list of dates in connection with his political life will be found of use by the student:—

- 1735. Enters Parliament.
- 1737. Surveyor General of Works (Walpole's administration).
- 1743. Lord of the Treasury (Pelham's administration).
- 1746. Secretary at War (Pelham's administration).
- 1754. Continued as Secretary at War by Newcastle. Combines with Pitt to annoy Robinson.
- 1755. Tempted by Newcastle to desert Pitt. Supports Robinson, and becomes a member of the Cabinet. Succeeds Robinson as Secretary of State and leader of the House.
- 1756. Resigns office under Newcastle. Asked by the king to form a ministry with Pitt, but Pitt refuses to join Fox.
- 1757. Becomes Paymaster of the Forces (Pitt-Newcastle administration). This office Fox held to the end of his public career.
- 1762. Leader of House (Bute's administration). Secures votes for Peace of Paris by bribery and intimidation.
- 1763. Created Lord Holland.
- 1765. Resigns Paymastership, and retires into private life with a large fortune.

1. 26. **Sir William Yonge** was Secretary at War for a part of Walpole's administration. He was an excellent debater, and often when he had come late into the House and missed the previous part of a discussion, he would speak admirably from notes furnished by Sir Robert Walpole.

1. 30. **Winnington.** Thomas Winnington was originally a Tory, but deserted to the Whigs in Walpole's time. When Walpole began to decline, he deserted him too.

## § 19

**page 13, l. 2. ponderous fox-hunters.** Addison has a well-known essay on *The Tory Foxhunter*, in which he hits off the foolish prejudices of men of this class, among them the belief that there had been no good weather in England since the Revolution.

**l. 3. King over the water,** that is, James, the Old Pretender, who kept his court on the Continent, first at St. Germain's, and afterwards in Rome.

**l. 7. Squire Western.** The reference is to Fielding's novel, *Tom Jones*, in which Squire Western is introduced as the type of the ignorant, coarse, and bigoted Tory squire of the eighteenth century. His exact words, which Macaulay, who often quoted from memory, has somewhat perverted, are: "I'd sooner ge my esteate to the zinking fund, that it may be sent to Hanover to corrupt our nation with". A sinking fund is a fund to which additions are made from time to time with the object of paying off some debt—in this case the national debt.

**l. 10. October Club.** A parliamentary club formed about 1690, which met first at the Bell Tavern, and afterwards at the Crown, in King Street, Westminster. It consisted originally of one hundred and fifty Tory squires, who were very pronounced in their views, and desired to have the Whigs impeached. Their name was derived from that of their favourite drink, October ale. They were a source of considerable annoyance to those of their fellow-Tories in the House who held more moderate opinions. "We are plagued here", writes Swift in a letter to Stella, "with an October Club, that is, a set of above a hundred Parliament men of the country, who drink October beer at home, and meet every evening at a tavern near the Parliament to consult affairs, and drive things on to extremes against the Whigs, to call the old ministry to account, and get off five or six heads."

**l. 15. Sir William Wyndham (1687-1740)** was a member of an old Somersetshire family. He attached himself to Bolingbroke in Anne's reign, and became Secretary at War in 1711 and Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1713. At the time of the Old Pretender's rebellion in 1715 he fell under suspicion as a Jacobite, and an officer was sent to arrest him. Though he managed to elude this officer, he thought it better to give himself up to the authorities. He was then committed to the Tower, but was eventually released without being put on his trial. He was a most determined opponent of Walpole, and by his eloquence and adroitness managed to keep the remnant of the Tory party in alliance with the opposition Whigs under Pulteney. At his death the alliance was broken.

## § 20

1. 19. **Patriots.** This party consisted of two divisions: first, the older Whigs, such as Pulteney, Carteret, and Chesterfield; second, the younger Whigs, such as Earl Temple, George Grenville, Lyttelton, and Pitt. These latter Walpole contemptuously nicknamed the "Boys".

1. 31. **schismatic**, one who deserts an established faith. The theological terms used in this sentence to express political differences may have appealed with singular force to Macaulay's readers in 1834, the date when this essay was published; for only a few years before the Catholic Relief Bill had become law, and in 1833 the Tractarian movement began in the Church of England.

1. 33. **Hampden.** See note on § 4.

**Russell.** Lord William Russell (1639-1683) was a man who would willingly have led a quiet, unambitious life, if his indignation at the unpatriotic statesmanship of Charles II and his favourites, and his fear lest the continuance of the Protestant religion in England should be endangered by the avowed Roman Catholic leanings of the Duke of York, afterwards James II, had not drawn him into a public career. As the champion of Protestantism and the opponent of tyranny he had a large following in the country and in Parliament. "I never knew any man", wrote Bishop Burnet, who accompanied him to the scaffold, "have so entire credit with the nation as he had." When he was accused of participation in the Rye House Plot, which was said to have for its object the assassination of Charles on his return from Newmarket races, the king and his party showed him little mercy. Like Algernon Sidney, he was condemned on insufficient evidence, and executed. After his death he was regarded as a martyr of the Whig cause, and the first parliament of William III declared that he had been "wrongfully convicted, attainted, and executed for high treason".

page 14, 1. 1. **principles of the Revolution.** See note on § 11.

1. 3. **Lyttelton.** George Lyttelton (1709-1773) was a great favourite with Frederick, Prince of Wales. As a poet and a historian he had a considerable reputation in his day. He is charged with deserting his friends to take the post of Chancellor of the Exchequer under Newcastle in 1755. The duties of the office, however, were not congenial to his cast of mind, and he soon made way for Legge. In 1759 he was raised to the peerage, and retired into private life. According to Horace Walpole, Lyttelton's chief ambition was "to go to heaven in a coronet". Pitt's eldest brother, Thomas, married a sister of Lyttelton's.

## § 21

1. 10. **Prince of Wales.** Frederick (1705-1751) was the son of George II and the father of George III. He was neither virtuous nor clever, but his hostility to his father drew the Opposition Whigs about him, and made him the central figure of a rival court.

## § 22

1. 15. **a constitutional Opposition** is an Opposition which, though it may disagree with the governing party on many questions, is still at one with it so far as the fundamental principles of state-government are concerned.

1. 16. **heir-apparent**, one whose succession to the crown is certain, provided that he outlives the present holder.

**page 15, l. 1. Lord Granville**, the title of Carteret.

1. 10. **four Princes of Wales.** George II was on bad terms with George I, and intrigued against him; Frederick was detested by George II, and surrounded himself with the opponents of his father's government; George III, though not in actual opposition to his grandfather, fell into the hands of the Tories; his son, George IV, found his chief friends among the leading Whigs.

## § 23

1. 22. **Tories who had impeached Somers.** For Somers' impeachment see note on § 4.

1. 23. **Harley.** See note on § 15.

**St. John.** Henry St. John, Viscount Bolingbroke (1678-1751), was a man of the highest ability. He and Harley were the leading Tories of Anne's reign. At the time of her death they intrigued to bring in the Pretender. On the failure of this attempt Bolingbroke fled to France and entered the Pretender's service. He was then impeached and attainted by the English Parliament, but in 1723 he was pardoned and allowed to return to England, where his property was restored to him, though he was still excluded from the House of Lords. Being thus debarred from taking a prominent part in politics, he turned to literature, and assisted the Opposition Whigs by his writings, chiefly in *The Craftsman*. He made a great name as a political philosopher, and his tract, *The Idea of a Patriot King*, supplied George III and his supporters with a theory which they tried to put into practice. Among his literary friends were Swift, Gay, and Pope. The last-named was largely indebted to Bolingbroke for the philosophy of the *Essay on Man*, and he

repaid the debt by many a flattering reference to the fallen statesman.

"O! while along the stream of time thy name  
Expanded flies, and gathers all its fame,  
Say, shall my little bark attendant sail,  
Pursue the triumph, and partake the gale?  
When statesmen, heroes, kings, in dust repose,  
Whose sons shall blush their fathers were thy foes,  
Shall then this verse to future age pretend  
Thou wert my guide, philosopher, and friend?"

l. 24. **too remiss, &c.** Macaulay is describing the extreme section of the Tory party, men who were not satisfied with their leaders, Harley and St. John, though they had shown favour to the landed interest, *i.e.* the country squires, by introducing a property qualification for members of Parliament, and to the Church by legislating against the dissenters in the Schism and Conformity Acts.

**page 16, l. 23. Scotch families.** An example of such conduct is to be found in Lord Lovat, who sent off his son to join the rebels in the year 1745, and himself stayed quietly at home, at the same time endeavouring to convince the English authorities that his son had gone off without his consent. His cunning, however, was of no avail, and at the end of the rebellion he was executed.

## § 24

l. 28. **Princess of Saxe-Gotha.** After the death of Frederick, his widow, the Princess Augusta, kept together the remnants of the Leicester House Party, and devoted herself to the education of her children. Her chief adviser was the Marquis of Bute. To their united efforts the stubborn temper and Tory principles of George III were mainly due.

l. 30. **Queen Caroline.** Caroline of Anspach was a woman of great sagacity and tact. She was a firm friend of Sir Robert Walpole, and managed her husband, George II, without seeming to do so.

l. 34. **Henry the Fourth (1553-1610), King of France and Navarre,** is here intended. To English readers he is best known as the hero of Macaulay's ballad on the battle of Ivry.

**Regent Orleans.** See note on § 6.

## § 25

**page 17, l. 12. Tindal.** The Rev. Nicholas Tindal, an industrious historian of the eighteenth century, translated from the French the famous *History of England* by Rapin, and continued the narrative to the year 1757.

1. 13. **Demosthenes**, Greek orator (385-322 B.C.).

1. 14. **Cicero**, Roman orator (106-43 B.C.).

1. 20. **Archdeacon Coxe**. William Coxe (1747-1828), still remembered as a historian, wrote, in addition to many other works, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole*, in which this criticism on Pitt's oratory is quoted.

1. 25. **Brougham**. Henry, first Lord Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868), was a well-known politician, orator, author, and advocate. He affected universal learning, but wrote and spoke too much for his reputation. He was Lord Chancellor in 1832 when this Essay was written. Macaulay, who was not one of his admirers, here couples him satirically with Mr. Hunt.

1. 26. **Hunt**. Henry Hunt (1773-1835), a Wiltshire farmer, was a notorious personage in the time of the Reform Bill agitation. Radical in politics, fluent and fiery in speech, he exerted great influence over the mobs that thronged to hear him, and was returned to the House of Commons as member for Preston. He was nicknamed "Orator Hunt".

1. 28. **Polish Count**. Joseph Borowlaski (1739-1837), the celebrated dwarf, was 3 feet 2 inches in height. He was born in Poland, and, after visiting several European courts, settled in England, where his talent and wit secured him the friendship of George IV. He is buried in Durham Cathedral.

1. 29. **Giant O'Brien**. Patrick Cotter (1760-1807), 8 feet 7 inches in height, adopted this show-name, already rendered familiar by an earlier Irish giant.

1. 30. **Anatomie Vivante**. This nickname, meaning 'living skeleton', was bestowed on the great French writer Voltaire, whose thinness is alluded to in Young's often-quoted epigram upon him:

"You are so witty, profligate, and thin;  
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin".

**Daniel Lambert** (1770-1809) weighed 739 pounds.

## § 26

1. 32. **reported**. Reporters in Pitt's time were not allowed to take notes in the House. They listened to the speeches, and then, retiring to some coffee-house, wrote out what they could remember. The merits and demerits of many of these speeches, as we have them now, must be attributed to the reporters. Dr. Johnson, a violent Tory, admitted that in doing work of this kind he wrote with a party bias. He was not going, as he said, "to let the Whig dogs have the best of it".

**page 18, l. 1. fluency and the personal advantages.** "Pitt was undoubtedly one of the greatest masters of ornamental eloquence", writes Horace Walpole. "His language was amazingly fine and flowing; his voice admirable; his action most expressive; his figure genteel and commanding."

## § 27

**l. 16. scarcely any report.** Macaulay is writing of the year 1736. The liberty of reporting has been regarded as a right since 1771, when the House sent the Lord Mayor and a brother magistrate to the Tower for ordering the imprisonment of an official who had arrested a printer, named Miller, within the limits of the City. The people showed their sympathy with the Lord Mayor and his fellow-sufferer by sending them daily presents of food and wine. John Wilkes was the real head of this opposition to the action of Parliament. To him we owe the present liberty of reporting.

**l. 29. Brutus or Coriolanus,** well-known characters in two of Shakespeare's Roman plays.

**page 19, l. 15. Court of Requests; Westminster Hall.** The Houses of Parliament, as Pitt knew them, were destroyed by fire in 1834, shortly after the appearance of this Essay. The Court of Requests no longer exists. Westminster Hall has been included in the present Houses of Parliament.

**l. 19. Garrick.** David Garrick (1716-1779) ranks the first of English actors. "That young man", said Pope, after witnessing his performance of Richard III, "never had his equal as an actor, and will never have a rival."

## § 29

**page 20, l. 6. Wolfe.** James Wolfe (1726-1759) was a leader of Pitt's choosing. In the unsuccessful Rochefort expedition (see § 84) he showed both practical ability and soldierly courage. As a consequence Pitt promoted him over the heads of his senior officers, and put him in command of the Canadian expedition. How he took Quebec in 1759, and fell in the moment of victory, is known to all. "Mr. Pitt", says Horace Walpole, commenting on the panegyric on Wolfe, "moved the House of Commons to order a monument for General Wolfe; and, in a low and plaintive voice, pronounced a kind of funeral oration. It was, perhaps, the worst harangue he ever uttered."

**l. 15. Shelburne.** William Petty Fitzmaurice, Earl of Shelburne and first Marquis of Lansdowne (1737-1805), belongs to Pitt's later career. He joined the Pitt-Grafton ministry of 1766, and, like Pitt, opposed the levying of taxes on the Colonies by

the English Parliament. He lived to become Prime Minister himself, to conclude peace with the United States, and to recognize their independence (1782-1783).

### § 30

l. 21. **Burke.** Edmund Burke (1728-1797) was born in Dublin. When quite a young man he came to London, and established his literary reputation by an *Essay on the Sublime and Beautiful*. He rose into political prominence under the Marquis of Rockingham, who made him his private secretary, and relied greatly upon his judgment. He belonged to the Old Whigs, and always endeavoured to keep his party true to the ideals of its founders. As a political orator he stands among the best, as a political thinker he is unrivalled. His speech on *American Taxation* and his *Reflections on the French Revolution* are among the finest of his productions, all of which are regarded as classic.

l. 22. **Charles Fox.** Charles James Fox (1749-1806) was the third son of Henry Fox, whose name occurs so frequently in this Essay. He was the rival of the younger Pitt, as his father had been the rival of the elder.

l. 29. **Mr. Stanley.** Edward Stanley, Earl of Derby (1799-1869), was Chief Secretary for Ireland at the time when this Essay was published. He was afterwards thrice Prime Minister. His brilliance in parliamentary discussion earned him the title of the "Rupert of debate".

### § 31

page 21, l. 22. **rhetorical**, belonging to rhetoric, or the art of oratory; that is, Pitt's speeches were eloquent, but not necessarily sound in fact and argument.

l. 24. **apophthegms** (pronounced *apothems*), pithy sayings.

### § 32

l. 32. **Walpole**, *i.e.* Horace Walpole, whose *Memoirs* have often been quoted in these notes. He was the son of Sir Robert.

page 22, l. 2. **clever school-boy.** Macaulay's 'school-boy' is familiar to all readers of the Essays. He is usually compared with his elders to their disadvantage. Reviewing Croker's edition of Boswell's *Life of Johnson*, Macaulay says: "The decisions of this editor on points of classical learning, though pronounced in a very authoritative tone, are generally such that, if a school-boy under our care were to utter them, our soul assuredly should not spare for his crying".

l. 5. **conceit**, a far-fetched thought.



## § 33

1. 8. Walpole, *i.e.* Sir Robert.

1. 21. Appeal to the Old Whigs. This pamphlet appeared in 1791, when Burke had separated from many of his Whig friends because they regarded the French Revolution with favour. "Mr. Walpole", writes Burke, "was an honourable man and a sound Whig. He was not, as the Jacobites and discontented Whigs of his time have represented him, and as ill-informed people still represent him, a prodigal and corrupt minister. They charged him, in their libels and seditious conversations, with having first reduced corruption to a system. Such was their cant. But he was far from governing by corruption. He governed by party attachments. The charge of systematic corruption is less applicable to him, perhaps, than to any minister who ever served the Crown for so great a length of time. He gained over very few from the Opposition."

1. 30. Pepys. Samuel Pepys (1632-1703), Secretary to the Admiralty under Charles II and James II, is known for his shorthand *Diary*, in which he has recorded not only the important political events of his time, but the trivial occurrences of his daily life, thereby giving a true picture of himself. As for this maxim of political wisdom, Pepys writes under October 6, 1666: "Sir W. Coventry told me that it is always observed that by bringing over one discontented man you raise up three in his room; which is a state lesson I never knew before".

## § 34

page 23, l. 1. maritime right. This refers to the right of search which the Spaniards both claimed and exercised within their American waters in order to check smuggling. See note on § 3.

1. 11. Buccaneers. The Spaniards of the sixteenth century were so exclusive in their claim to a supremacy over the New World, and treated all intruders with such cruelty, that many French and English traders turned pirates in self-defence. They were called Buccaneers, Brethren of the Coast, Filibusters. One of their leaders, Henry Morgan, a Welshman, harassed the Spaniards with such success that Charles II knighted him and made him deputy-governor of Jamaica. The good feeling between the English and the French buccaneers was considerably lessened during our struggle with France in William III's reign, and when a French prince succeeded to the throne of Spain in 1701, the piratical partnership was finally dissolved.

1. 14. the line, the equator.

1. 18. says Burke, in his *Letters on a Regicide Peace*.

## § 35

**page 24, l. 3. Newcastle.** Thomas Pelham Holles, Duke of Newcastle (1693-1768), was a peer of great wealth, inheriting the estates of his father, Lord Pelham, and of his uncle, John Holles, Duke of Newcastle. He was an ardent Whig, and assisted in securing the crown for George I on the death of Anne. Like his brother, Henry Pelham, he received his political training in Walpole's school. In 1724 he was appointed Secretary of State, and managed to hold the office for thirty years, until the death of his brother in 1754. He then became Premier himself, but in 1756 he was compelled to retire before the Pitt-Devonshire alliance. His political connections, however, were so strong that in 1757 he returned to power with Pitt as his chief ally. His career really closed in 1762, when Bute, the favourite of George III, was raised to the premiership. Macaulay, following Horace Walpole, is very severe on the shortcomings of Newcastle, who must, in spite of his detractors, have had some redeeming qualities. Industry and an incomparable knowledge of parliamentary tactics must be allowed him. Further, it is much to his credit that in a venal age he twice refused a pension, and eventually left office £300,000 poorer than when he entered it.

**l. 4. Hardwicke.** Philip Yorke, first Earl of Hardwicke (1690-1764), was the son of a Dover attorney. His abilities and his good fortune were unusual. He made powerful friends in early life, and they pushed him rapidly to the front. At thirty he was Solicitor-General, at forty Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and at forty-seven Lord Chancellor. At first a supporter of Walpole, he afterwards joined those who clamoured for a war with Spain, and, after Walpole's fall, continued in possession of the Lord Chancellorship through the successive administrations of Wilmington, Pelham, and Newcastle. He is now chiefly remembered for his Marriage Act, by which the scandal of Fleet marriages, hurriedly celebrated by imprisoned and discredited parsons, was abolished.

**l. 5. patriots.** See § 20.

**l. 7. Pitt and those persons.** Macaulay appears to stand alone among modern historians in crediting this scandalous story of Pitt and his friends. Both Lecky and Gardiner leave it unmentioned.

**l. 14. Boys.** See § 20.

**l. 23. Coxe's Life of Walpole.** See § 25.

## § 36

**l. 26. placeman,** one who holds a place under a government.

**l. 30. unpopularity of Pulteney, &c.** Walpole's old opponents became unpopular because they adopted his methods of

parliamentary corruption, and did not press his prosecution vigorously enough to please the people at large. Politicians out of office generally promise greater reforms than they can carry out when they come into office.

“As bees, on flowers alighting, cease to hum,  
So, settling into office, Whigs are dumb.”

page 25, l. 1. **secret tribunal**, that is, the committee appointed in 1742 to enquire into the acts of the late government.

l. 3. **late First Lord of the Treasury**, Sir Robert Walpole.

l. 8. **bill of indemnity**, a bill assuring accomplices, who choose to give evidence, that they shall not be prosecuted for those misdeeds of their own which they may have to reveal in giving evidence. ‘Indemnity’ literally means ‘freedom from loss’ (Latin *in* and *damnum*).

l. 10. **Earl of Orford**, the title taken by Sir Robert Walpole.

### § 37

l. 32. **favour shown to the German dominions**. Carteret was an expert in continental politics. It was his wish to join the states of Europe in a combination against the ambition of France, at this time reinforced by Spain. He therefore paid great attention to the interests of Hanover, the possession of which gave us frequent opportunities of interfering in continental affairs.

### § 38

page 26, l. 8. **Duchess of Marlborough**. Sarah Jennings married Colonel Churchill, who in the course of time became the celebrated Duke of Marlborough. She entered the household of Anne while the latter was still a princess, and a very warm friendship grew up between the two ladies. Anne, on coming to the throne, began to show her Tory predilections, and the Duchess, who was an ardent Whig, strove as far as possible to overrule her mistress. So imperious was the Duchess that Anne rebelled, and allowed herself to drift under the influence of Mrs. Masham, who was the instrument of Harley in particular and of the Tory party in general. At length the power of the Duchess was so thoroughly undermined that Harley secured her dismissal from the Queen’s service in 1711. Shortly afterwards the Duke was accused of peculation and deprived of his position as Captain-General. Marlborough’s son died in his father’s lifetime. The ducal honours descended through the second daughter to the Spencers, Earls of Sunderland, whose surname is now Spencer-

Churchill. The couplet quoted from Pope is to be found in the second of the *Moral Essays*, where the Duchess is satirized under the name of 'Atossa'.

### § 39

1. 34. **the broad bottom.** Henry Pelham's government (1744-1754) was thus nicknamed, because it was built up on a broad foundation, including, as it did, the chief men of the Whig and the Tory parties, with the exception of Carteret and Pulteney.

**page 27, l. 4. some expressions.** "It is now too apparent", said Pitt, "that this great, this powerful, this formidable kingdom is considered only as a province to a despicable electorate."

### § 40

1. 9. **omitted nothing.** If there is a contemptuous note in this sentence, it is unnecessary, as Pitt was quite justified in making himself agreeable to the government, seeing that Carteret, the man to whose policy he objected, had retired from office.

1. 11. **place in the household of Prince Frederick.** Pitt was Groom of the Bedchamber in the little court at Leicester House.

1. 31. **rebellion.** Charles Edward Stuart, the Young Pretender, landed in Scotland in 1745. He marched on Edinburgh, and defeated Cope at Prestonpans. Moving southward, he penetrated to Derby, from which he retired on the advice of his officers, but much against his own desire. In Scotland he was again victorious, winning the battle of Falkirk on January 17th, 1746. In February the Pelhams deserted the king.

1. 35. **party which had placed his family, &c., that is, the Whigs.**

### § 42

**page 29, l. 1. foreign princes who received the pay of England.** See § 56.

1. 4. **vails, presents of money given to servants.** Skeat takes 'vail' to be a headless form of 'avail', which was used as a substantive in the sense of 'profit', 'help'. It is derived from the French *avayle*, which had the same signification.

### § 43

1. 6. **His conduct surprised.** Foreigners, too, were astonished at Pitt's refusal of the commission,  $\frac{1}{2}$  per cent, on the subsidies. "Surely", said the King of Sardinia, "this Englishman is somewhat more than a man."

## § 44

l. 22. **Eight quiet years**, from Pitt's taking office to the death of Henry Pelham, 1746-1754.

l. 25. **Peace was made**. This is the famous peace of Aix-la-Chapelle, by which all the belligerents, except Frederick of Prussia, who kept Silesia, restored their conquests. The question of Spain's right of search in American waters (see § 34) was left unnoticed.

l. 27. **Prince Frederick died**. "Let us not seek for stones to batter that forgotten grave," writes Thackeray in *The Four Georges*, "but acquiesce in the contemporary epitaph over him:

'Here lies Fred,  
Who was alive, and is dead.  
Had it been his father,  
I had much rather.  
Had it been his brother,  
Still better than another.  
Had it been his sister,  
No one would have missed her.  
Had it been the whole generation,  
Still better for the nation.  
But since 't is only Fred,  
Who was alive, and is dead,  
There's no more to be said.'

## § 45

page 30, l. 12. **Murray**. William Murray, first Earl of Mansfield (1704-1793), was the fourth son of Viscount Stormont. He was called to the bar in 1731, and soon got together a large practice. Appointed Solicitor-General in 1742 under Wilmington, and Attorney-General in 1754 under Newcastle, he became Chief-Justice in 1756 and was raised to the peerage. In politics he was an opponent of Pitt. He had a fine contempt for popularity. "I honour the king," he once said, "and respect the people, but many things, acquired by the favour of either, are, in my account, not worth ambition. I wish popularity, but it is that popularity which follows, not that which is run after. It is that popularity which, sooner or later, never fails to do justice to the pursuit of noble ends by noble means." High terms were offered him by Newcastle for his assistance in 1756, but Murray was not to be diverted from his legal career. His eloquence and his power of comprehending all the facts of a case have given him a very distinguished position among English lawyers.

1. 28. he might have been Prime Minister, if he had entered on the career opened to him by Newcastle's offers in 1756 (see § 63).

## § 46

1. 35. **Fox.** Of Henry Fox sufficient has already been said in these notes (see § 18). His greater son, Charles James Fox (1749-1806), was throughout his career a champion of the oppressed and an opponent of the oppressor. He was against imposing taxes on America at the risk of rebellion; he was among the first to plead for the recognition of American independence. In the impeachment of Hastings he took an active part. He joined Wilberforce in his efforts to abolish slavery. He drew the attention of England to the grievances of the Irish, and exerted himself to do away with the civil disabilities of the Roman Catholics and the Protestant nonconformists.

page 31, 1. 3. **Duke of Cumberland.** William Augustus (1721-1765) was the second son of George II. He was wounded at Dettingen, when his father won a victory over the French. Two years later he would himself have been victorious over the same foe at Fontenoy if his advance had been supported by our Dutch allies. In 1745 he was recalled to deal with the Pretender's rebellion. At Culloden he completely routed the Scotch in 1746, and then treated the vanquished with such barbarity that he obtained the nickname of the Butcher. In the Seven Years' War he was once again at the head of our forces on the Continent, but he was forced to surrender to the French at Klosterseven in 1757. "Here is my son, who has ruined me and disgraced himself", said his cruel father on his return. After this failure the Duke retired into private life, though, at the instance of his nephew, George III, he sometimes intervened in politics. Macaulay, in his second essay on Pitt, sketches the character of Cumberland with much sympathy. "The Duke", he writes, "was not a man to be loved; but he was eminently a man to be trusted. He had an intrepid temper, a strong understanding, and a high sense of honour and duty. As a general, he belonged to a remarkable class of captains, captains, we mean, whose fate it has been to lose almost all the battles which they have fought, and yet to be reputed stout and skilful soldiers."

1. 9. **Reynolds.** Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) was the first President of the Royal Academy (1769), and is generally regarded as the founder of the British school of painting. He was a great friend of literary men, such, for instance, as Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith, and Burke. Goldsmith thus sketches him:—

"His pencil was striking, resistless, and grand;  
 His manners were gentle, complying, and bland;  
 Still born to improve us in every part,  
 His pencil our faces, his manners our heart;  
 To coxcombs averse, yet most civilly steering;  
 When they judged without skill, he was still hard of hearing;  
 When they talked of their Raphaels, Correggios, and stuff,  
 He shifted his trumpet, and only took snuff".

His portrait of Fox is now preserved at Holland House.

l. 9. **Nollekens.** Joseph Nollekens (1737-1823) was the leading sculptor of his time. In addition to sculpture of an ambitious kind, he executed many commissions for funeral monuments. Our cathedrals and churches contain plenty of examples. He was very penurious, and died worth £200,000. His bust of Fox is in the National Portrait Gallery.

l. 12. **his delivery was hesitating.** To the same effect writes Horace Walpole: "Fox, with a great hesitation in his elocution and a barrenness of expression, had conquered these impediments and the prejudices they had raised against his speaking, by a vehemence of reasoning and closeness of argument that beat all the orators of his time".

l. 30. **bad political school;** that is, Sir Robert Walpole's.

page 32, l. 4. **humbug.** This word, compounded of *hum*, a hoax, and *bug*, a spectre or bugbear, and meaning originally 'sham bugbear', came into use about 1740. "It is indeed a blackguard sound", says a writer in the *Student* for January, 1751, "made use of by most people of distinction."

l. 13. **junto**, a knot of men, a faction. The word is of Spanish origin.

## § 49

page 33, l. 8. **Sir John Cutler.** This wealthy London merchant (1608-1693) has experienced a cruel fate. His vices are remembered, his virtues forgotten. Though a miser, he could yet be generous, when he found a suitable object. The Grocers' Company, the Royal College of Physicians, and the Royal Society received large donations from him.

l. 26. **Craggs.** He was appointed Secretary of State in 1718. See note on § 11.

l. 31. **Dodington.** See note on § 5.

## § 50

page 34, l. 16. **secret-service money**, money which a government is allowed to spend without being called upon to specify exactly the ends for which it is spent. A legitimate use

of such money is to buy information concerning the military strength and unrevealed intentions of foreign powers. An illegitimate use, too frequent in the last century, is to bribe members of parliament to support the ministry. The Peace of Paris in 1763 was secured by a lavish distribution of secret-service money to the amount of more than £80,000.

1. 18. **First Lord of the Treasury**; at this time Newcastle.

## § 51

**page 35, l. 1. gratifications**, a mild term for bribes.

1. 7. **ministerial boroughs**. "The government, by the proprietary rights of the crown over the Cornish boroughs, by the votes of its numerous excise or revenue officers, by direct purchase, or by bestowing places or peerages on the proprietors, exercised an absolute authority over many seats" (Lecky, *England in the Eighteenth Century*, vol. i. p. 435).

1. 14. **Sir Thomas Robinson** (1695-1750) was the fourth son of Sir William Robinson of Newby, in Yorkshire. His mother, Mary Aislacie, was the sister of John Aislacie, already mentioned in § 11 of this Essay for his conduct in the South Sea affair. Robinson entered the diplomatic service, and for eighteen years was our ambassador at Vienna. He was instrumental in bringing about the treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle. He was by no means ambitious of acting as leader of the House, and only consented to do so because the king and Newcastle put pressure upon him. To the king he was very acceptable as a statesman well acquainted with German politics. When he retired from his uncongenial duties, a pension of £2000 on the Irish establishment was granted to him, and in 1761 he was raised to the peerage as Baron Grantham. In diplomacy he showed considerable ability, but he was not fitted by his experience to lead the Commons, and none knew it better than he himself did.

## § 52

1. 24. **jack-boot**, a high boot coming above the knee.

## § 53

1. 27. **in India**. After the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) the French and the English in India still remained in a state of war, fomenting the quarrels of native princes, and taking opposite sides. Under the bold and ingenious Dupleix the French had become paramount in the Carnatic and the Deccan. Princes supported by their interest held the reins of power in those districts. In 1751, however, Clive, by his brilliant



defence of Arcot, daunted the French and their native allies, and in 1752 Lawrence and Clive drove the French from their siege of Trichinopoly. The tide of success was thus turned in favour of the English. In 1754 the French government recalled Dupleix, and so removed the chief obstacle to English progress.

1. 30. in **America**. The same aggressive policy was inaugurated by the French in America after the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle. The English colonies lay mainly along the Atlantic sea-board. The French held Louisiana and Canada. They proceeded to claim all the country west of the Alleghanies, and to expel English traders and settlers from the valleys of the Ohio and Mississippi. The English retaliated by driving the French out of Acadia, and forming a settlement called Halifax, now the capital of Nova Scotia. In addition, the English started the Ohio Company to exploit the Ohio valleys, while the French, to check their advance, built Fort Duquesne on the Ohio. Such was the history of the Anglo-French struggle in America up to 1754. As in India, the natives took opposite sides.

## § 54

1. 35. **Secretary of State**, Robinson.

**page 36**, l. 1. **Paymaster of the Forces**, Pitt.

1. 2. **Secretary at War**, Fox.

1. 13. **seat in the Cabinet**. This offer was made and accepted in November, 1754.

## § 55

1. 21. **negotiations pending**, concerning the forts built by the English and French in America.

1. 23. **Towards the close of the session**. The king's message was read on March 25, 1755.

1. 29. **An English force was cut off in America**. In July, 1755, General Braddock, while advancing on Fort Duquesne, a French military post on the Ohio, fell into an ambuscade of Indians. He was warned by his American officers of the treacherous nature of Indian warfare, but, scorning their advice, he marched tranquilly onward until in a deep forest-ravine the war-whoops of the Indians rang through the air, and a murderous fire from invisible rifles assailed each flank of his force. The English rushed forward, to find the French waiting for them, while the Indians, leaping from ambush, closed in on the rear. Of 2000 English 1000 are said to have fallen. Braddock was wounded, and died four days later. George Washington was the only officer who escaped alive.

## § 56

**page 37, l. 3. Frederick the Second.** George II's sister, Sophia Dorothea, married Frederick William I of Prussia. Their son was Frederick the Great, here called the Second.

**l. 4. electoral dominions.** The ruler of Hanover was called Elector, because he had a right to vote in the election of a German Emperor.

## § 57

**l. 12. Legge.** Henry Bilson Legge (1708-1764), a younger son of the Earl of Dartmouth, had held various financial offices under government before he was appointed Chancellor of the Exchequer by Newcastle in 1754. Newcastle, whose delight it was to snub his own creatures, had given offence to Legge by seeking the advice of others on financial matters. Legge retaliated by refusing to sign the warrants authorizing the payment of the subsidies. His excuse was that Parliament had not been informed of the terms of the subsidy treaties, and might disapprove of them. Naturally the duke dismissed him. In the Pitt-Devonshire and Pitt-Newcastle ministries Legge, who was a follower of Pitt, returned to the Chancellorship of the Exchequer.

**l. 16. young Prince of Wales,** afterwards George III, round whom the old Leicester House party was rallying itself.

**l. 25. Hessian subsidy,** the subsidy paid to the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel, in Prussia, for the use of his troops.

**l. 32. Russian subsidy.** The idea of the Russian subsidy was eventually dropped, and an agreement made between the King of England and the King of Prussia by which Hanover and Prussia were reciprocally guaranteed from invasion (1756). A yearly subsidy of £670,000 began to be paid to Prussia in 1758.

## § 58

**page 38, l. 9. heir-apparent,** that is, Prince George of Wales, afterwards George III, whose claim to the throne could not be upset by the birth of some one with a superior claim, as is the case with an heir-presumptive.

**l. 15. Hamilton.** William Gerard Hamilton (1729-1796) spoke in support of the subsidies. From this speech, which was his only serious oratorical effort, he obtained the nickname of Single-Speech Hamilton.

## § 60

**page 39, l. 13. Minorca,** one of the Balearic Isles, at the western end of the Mediterranean. General Stanhope took it

from the Spanish in 1708, and the possession of it was confirmed to us by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713. The Duke of Richelieu captured it in 1756. Since then it has twice been under our rule. It now belongs to Spain. Port-Mahon, the capital of the island, is situated at the end of a deep and narrow bay.

1. 17. **Admiral Byng.** John Byng (1704-1757) was the fourth son of Viscount Torrington, a distinguished English admiral. When the French, sailing from Toulon, had made themselves masters of all Minorca, with the exception of Fort St. Philip, in Port-Mahon, Byng was despatched for the purpose of throwing supplies into this place, where the English garrison under General Blakeney was still maintaining a brave defence. Byng's fleet was undermanned, wretchedly fitted out, and inferior in number of guns to the French fleet. Macaulay here writes as if no engagement took place. But this is not the fact. An action in which the English lost forty-two killed was fought off Minorca. The English van, under Rear-admiral West, behaved with great gallantry. One of our ships, however, had her foretop-mast shot away; she was then mismanaged, and the vessels astern of her were thrown into such confusion that they never got into action. This confusion is said to have been due entirely to Byng's bad seamanship. "It is impossible", writes Allen in his *Battles of the British Navy* (i. 173), "to justify the proceedings of Admiral Byng and the ships of his division." The French admiral did not follow up his advantage, but withdrew from the scene of conflict. After this Byng, believing that the French would return in overpowering force, and fearful of losing an English fleet at so critical a time, retired to Gibraltar. His subsequent history is narrated by Macaulay in this Essay. Posterity has in great measure reversed the verdict passed on Byng by his contemporaries. His personal courage, at any rate, is beyond question.

1. 21. **A storm broke forth.** "The admiral", says Horace Walpole, "was burned in effigy in all the great towns; his seat and park were assaulted by the mob, and with difficulty saved. The streets and shops swarmed with injurious ballads, libels, and prints, in some of which was mingled a little justice on the ministers."

1. 23. **Excise.** For some account of Sir Robert Walpole's excise scheme, which was brought out in 1733, see the notes on § 16. The riots in connection with it were mainly the result of misrepresentations in *The Craftsman*, the organ of Bolingbroke and Pulteney.

**South-Sea.** See the notes on § 11.

1. 34. **supplies should be stopped.** The towns instructed their representatives to vote against furnishing the incompetent ministry with funds for carrying on the war—a wild, unpatriotic policy which shows the exasperation of the people.

## § 61

**page 40, l. 6. Brown's Estimate.** John Brown (1715-1766), the son of a Northumberland parson, was a man of considerable ability. His poetical and philosophical writings, though now forgotten, earned him such a reputation that he was invited by the Empress of Russia to settle in St. Petersburg for the purpose of organizing Russian education. The full title of the book here alluded to is *An Estimate of the Manners and Principles of the Times*. According to Brown, the leading characteristic of the age was "a vain, luxurious, and selfish effeminacy". "Except in a few minds of uncommon greatness", he wrote, "the principles of public spirit exist not." Though Brown was naturally prone to despondency and pessimism, there is no doubt that much truth underlay his arraignment of contemporary England. As Lecky says, "the fault of the time was not so much the amount of vice as the defect of virtue, the general depression of motives, the unusual absence of unselfish and disinterested action" (*England in the Eighteenth Century*, i. 471). Brown eventually became insane, and committed suicide. One of his latest works was a justification of the character and conduct of Pitt, in whom he found a bright exception to the wide-spread depravity of the time.

1. 7. **Cowper's Table Talk.** The following are Cowper's lines on this subject:—

- "A. The inestimable estimate of Brown  
Rose like a paper kite, and charmed the town;  
But measures, planned and executed well,  
Shifted the wind that raised it, and it fell.  
He trod the very self-same ground you tread,  
And victory refuted all he said.
- B. And yet his judgment was not framed amiss;  
Its error, if it erred, was merely this,—  
He thought the dying hour already come,  
And a complete recovery struck him dumb."

1. 8. **Burke's Letters on a Regicide Peace.** "I remember," writes Burke, "in the beginning of what has lately been called the Seven Years' War, that an eloquent writer and ingenious speculator, Dr. Brown, upon some reverses which happened in the beginning of that war, published an elaborate philosophical discourse, to prove that the distinguishing features of the people of England had been totally changed, and that a

frivolous effeminacy was becoming the national character. Nothing could be more popular than that work." In the same spirit as Cowper and Macaulay, he proceeds to show that even in that period of lost self-esteem the English had in themselves greater capabilities than they dreamed of. "We emerged from the gulf of that speculative despondency; and were buoyed up to the highest point of practical vigour. Never did the masculine spirit of England display itself with more energy, nor ever did its genius soar with a prouder pre-eminence over France, than at the time when frivolity and effeminacy had been at least tacitly acknowledged as their national character by the good people of this kingdom."

## § 62

1. 22. **sacrifice of Byng.** Newcastle seems to have been indecently eager to offer up the admiral to the rage of the people. "Indeed, he shall be tried immediately; he shall be hanged directly", he is reported to have said to a deputation which had made representations against Byng.

## § 63

1. 28. **Secretary of State, Fox.**

1. 29. **First Lord of the Treasury, Newcastle.**

1. 31. **scapegoat**, one who suffers for the misdeeds of others. The term has its origin in an old Jewish custom described in Leviticus, chap. xvi, "And Aaron shall lay both his hands upon the head of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited".

1. 34. **Murray.** See note on § 45.

**page 41, l. 1. Chief-Justice.** Murray preferred the position of Chief-Justice, because it is a permanent appointment, whereas the Attorney-General follows the fortunes of the party to which he belongs.

1. 4. **Duchy of Lancaster.** Lancaster was granted as an earldom to Edmund, Earl of Lancaster, by his father, Henry III, and in the time of Edmund's grandson it was erected into a duchy. John of Gaunt married Blanche, the heiress of the Lancaster line, and became Duke of Lancaster. His honours were transmitted to his descendants, Henry IV, Henry V, and Henry VI. After the overthrow of the last-named, the Duchy

was by act of Parliament vested in the crown for ever. Several officials, of whom the chancellor is the chief, are still appointed to manage the affairs of the duchy, but since 1873, when the Court of the County Palatine was abolished, their duties have been almost nominal. The chancellorship was practically a sinecure in Murray's time.

1. 5. **tellership of the Exchequer.** The tellers of the Exchequer, four in number, received the moneys due to the king, and discharged the debts payable by the king. Their office is now abolished. The word 'teller' is a corruption of 'tallier', which is derived from 'tally' (Latin *talea*), a stick. Records of payment were anciently kept by means of corresponding notches cut in two sticks, one of which remained in the Exchequer, the other in the possession of the debtor.

1. 6. **six thousand a year.** "What merit have I", said Murray, "that you should load this country, for which so little is done with spirit, with the additional burden of £6000 a year?"

1. 11. **the address.** At the opening of a parliamentary session the King's, or Queen's, Speech is read. It is the composition of the leading ministers, and contains a brief outline of their future policy. To move that this policy be adopted is to "move the address". Other speakers following on the same side are said to speak in favour of the address. Murray, then, was asked to speak in support of Newcastle's policy as announced in the King's Speech.

## § 66

1. 30. **old injuries,** the withdrawal of Fox in November, 1754, from his alliance with Pitt against Newcastle and Robinson. See § 54.

## § 67

1. 32. **Duke of Devonshire.** William Cavendish, fourth Duke of Devonshire (1720-1764), much respected for his upright character, was at this time Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Like his ancestors and descendants, he was an ardent supporter of Whig doctrines.

**page 42, l. 1. The Great Seal, &c.** When the Great Seal, that is, the office of Lord Chancellor, is put into commission, no Lord Chancellor is appointed, and his duties are delegated to a committee. In this particular case the committee consisted of three persons.

1. 3. **Lord Temple.** Richard Temple Grenville (1711-1779) was, according to Horace Walpole, "an absolute creature of Pitt, vehement in whatever faction he was engaged, and as

mischievous as his understanding would let him be, which is not saying he was very bad". He was certainly a faithful follower of Pitt, taking office with him in the Pitt-Devonshire ministry, and afterwards in the Pitt-Newcastle ministry. When Pitt retired in 1761 because the rest of the ministry would not sanction a declaration of war against Spain, Temple also retired. He has been put forward by some as the author of the *Letters of Junius*.

## § 68

l. 6. **lasted not quite five months.** December, 1756—April, 1757.

l. 14. **obtaining a seat.** In 1754 Pitt had been elected by Newcastle's influence for Aldborough in Yorkshire. On this occasion he was elected for two places, Buckingham and Oakhampton. He chose to sit for the latter, which was in Devonshire and formed part of the family estate.

l. 18. **Reform Bill.** This bill (1832), which found a warm supporter in Macaulay, disfranchised no fewer than fifty-six rotten boroughs, of which Oakhampton, mentioned in the last note, was one.

l. 24. **remedy.** When a member of the government fails to secure election, it is usual for a less important member of the same party to vacate his seat and allow the great man to be elected in his stead.

l. 29. **cabal**, a small band of men who have some secret design in view. The word is not derived, as is so often asserted, from the initial letters of Clarendon, Ashley, Buckingham, Arlington, Lauderdale, five leading politicians in Charles II's reign, but from a Hebrew word meaning 'a secret'.

## § 69

**page 43, l. 1. crassa ignorantia**, dense ignorance; ignorance of things which a man may rightly be supposed to know.

l. 4. **He died.** Horace Walpole, in a letter to Sir Horace Mann, gives the following account of Byng's execution:—"Admiral Byng's tragedy was completed on Monday—a perfect tragedy, for there were variety of incidents, villainy, murder, and a hero. . . . He said that, being acquitted of cowardice, and being persuaded on the coolest reflection that he had acted for the best, and should act so again, he was not unwilling to suffer. He desired to be shot on the quarter-deck, not where common malefactors are; came out at twelve, sat down in a chair, for he would not kneel, and refused to have his face covered, that his countenance might show

whether he feared death; but being told that it might frighten his executioners, he submitted, gave the signal at once, received one shot through the head, another through the heart, and fell. Do cowards live or die thus? Can that man want spirit who only fears to terrify his executioners? Has the aspen Duke of Newcastle lived thus?" Horace Walpole's indignation was shared by other leading men of the age, including Dr. Johnson, who wrote warmly on Byng's behalf. Voltaire laughed at the folly of the English, and sarcastically said that the admiral was shot *pour encourager les autres*. Byng's family had the following epitaph inscribed upon his monument:—

“ To the perpetual disgrace  
Of public justice,  
The Honourable John Byng, Esq.,  
Admiral of the Blue,  
Fell a martyr to political  
Persecution,  
March 14, in the year 1757;  
When bravery and loyalty  
Were insufficient securities  
For the life and honour of  
A Naval Officer ”.

l. 19. **the apple**, an allusion to the story of William Tell. The same incident is related of William of Cloudesley in the old English ballad “Adam Bell”.

l. 29. **Marie Louise**, the second wife of Napoleon, was the daughter of Francis I, Emperor of Austria. Napoleon married her after divorcing Josephine.

l. 31. **Faubourg Saint Antoine**, a poor district in the east end of Paris.

## § 70

**page 44, l. 11. the King was inexorable.** George II was particularly violent against Byng. In the same spirit he never forgave his own son, the Duke of Cumberland, for the surrender at Klosterseven.

## § 71

l. 20. **Secretary of State, Pitt.**

l. 21. **Vatel.** There is some mistake here. The King could not have made this remark of Pitt in 1756, as Vatel's famous work on international law, *Le Droit des Gens*, did not appear till 1758. Horace Walpole, in his *Memoirs of the Reign of George II* (vol. ii. p. 267), states that the King complained that Pitt had not read Wicquefort, a jurist, whose most celebrated



work, *L'Ambassadeur et ses Fonctions*, was first published in 1681, and frequently reprinted afterwards. It would appear, then, that Macaulay has by a slip put the name of one great jurist for that of another equally well known.

1. 22. **First Lord of the Admiralty**, Lord Temple.

1. 28. **Oudenarde**. Marlborough and Prince Eugene of Savoy defeated the French at Oudenarde in 1708. George II took part in the battle, but his courage on this or any other occasion has never been called in question. "On public festivals", writes Thackeray of George II, "he always appeared in the hat and coat he wore on the famous day of Oudenarde; and the people laughed, but kindly, at the odd old garment, for bravery never goes out of fashion."

## § 72

1. 32. **St. James's**. After the burning of Whitehall in William III's reign St. James's became the London palace of our sovereigns, and remained such until the present Queen occupied Buckingham Palace. St. James's is now used for receptions and state balls.

**page 45**, 1. 1. **Common Council**, that is, the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and other members of the Corporation of London.

1. 2. **freedom of the city**. Pitt's friend and follower, Legge, was at the same time elected an honorary citizen of London.

## § 73

1. 15. **miscarriage of the preceding year**, the mismanagement of the war with France during the year 1756, with special reference to the failure to relieve Minorca.

## § 74

1. 35. **the most powerful nobleman of the Whig party**, the Duke of Newcastle.

**page 46**, 1. 1. **the ablest debater**, Henry Fox. See § 46 of this Essay.

1. 20. **prescriptive right**, a right based on long-established use or custom.

## § 75

1. 28. **that philanthropy**, a general love of mankind, broader than patriotism, which is the love of one's own race.

**the great French writers**, more particularly Rousseau, Voltaire, and Montesquieu.

l. 31. **City of the Violet Crown.** The Greek poet Pindar in one of his fragments styles Athens 'violet-crowned' (*ιοστέφανος*).

l. 32. **City of the Seven Hills.** Rome was so called from the seven hills upon which it was built.

### § 77

page 47, l. 19. **not wholly aristocratical.** Men of humble birth who had made great fortunes often wrested seats from the aristocracy by sheer superiority in bribery. The large towns, with their rich merchants and nonconformists, were usually democratic. In them Pitt found his chief supporters, as can be seen in §§ 72, 91 of this Essay.

l. 23. **a free press.** The press at this date was not free. Reporters were not permitted to take notes in the House, and printers were still summoned to the bar of the Commons and punished for comments made in their newspapers. The action of Wilkes in 1771 put a stop to the use of these privileges.

### § 79

page 48, l. 10. **He came down to the House.** Horace Walpole describes the scene. "Pitt, it was expected, would take advantage of illness, and not appear. But he refined on that old finesse; and pretending to waive the care of a broken constitution, when his country demanded his service, and as a pledge of his sincerity in the scrutiny, he came to the discussion in all the studied apparatus of a theatric valetudinarian. The weather was unseasonably warm; yet he was dressed in an old coat and waistcoat of beaver laced with gold; over that, a red surtout, the right arm lined with fur, and appendent with many black ribands, to indicate his inability of drawing it over his right arm, which hung in a crape sling, but which, in the warmth of speaking, he drew out with unlucky activity, and brandished as usual. On his legs were riding stockings."

### § 80

page 49, l. 3. **two of a trade.** "Two of a trade can never agree", is the English proverb. The Greeks had one to the same effect, *ὁ κεραμεὺς κεραμῇ κοτέει καὶ τέκτονι τέκτων*, "potter quarrels with potter and carpenter with carpenter".

l. 5. **the jobbing department,** the giving of money and places to secure votes. For Newcastle's monopolization of this department see § 51 of this Essay. Fox showed how he could manage the art of bribery when he spent about £80,000 to get members of the House to vote for the Peace of Paris in 1762.

## § 81

1. 9. **eleven weeks**, from April 9th to June 28th, 1757.

1. 19. **Lord Waldegrave.** James Waldgrave (or Waldegrave), second Earl of Waldegrave (1715-1763), was a descendant of James II. He was sensible, well-informed, and devoted to the interests of the King, with whom he was a great favourite. He had already been appointed a Lord of the Bedchamber, Warden of the Stannaries, and Governor to the young Prince of Wales, afterwards George III. Though far from desiring to figure as Prime Minister, he consented to do so in order to oblige the King, but, not being a politician by profession, he failed to form a government. George II had already employed him to bring Fox and Newcastle together in 1755, and at a later date, 1763, he was asked to join Bute's administration. Of his conduct on the present occasion Walpole writes as follows:—"It was difficult even to know whom they should place at the head of the Treasury. In this distress the King (probably by the suggestion of Mr. Fox) sent for Lord Waldegrave, and commanded him to accept that high and dangerous post. The public was not more astonished at that designation than the Earl himself. Though no man knew the secrets of Government better, no man knew the manœuvre of business less. He was no speaker in Parliament, had no interest there, and though universally beloved and respected where known, was by no means familiarized to the eyes of the nation. He declined as long as modesty became him; engaged with spirit, the moment he felt the abandoned state in which his master and benefactor stood."

## § 82

1. 30. **Leicester House.** Here the future George III lived with his mother, the Princess Augusta. Tories and discontented Whigs were the chief frequenters of the house. See §§ 22, 23 of this Essay for an account of the beginning of the Leicester House party, under the patronage of Frederick, Prince of Wales. The celebrated Lord Chesterfield was the person deputed by Leicester House to bring Pitt into friendly relations with Newcastle on this occasion.

1. 34. **Pelham.** From 1743 to 1754 Henry Pelham had been Prime Minister. He was no great statesman, but he understood parliamentary tactics, and had enormous family interest at his back. "All men had concurred to serve under him," says Horace Walpole, "none had prepared any intrigues to succeed him. The King had found it comfortable to be governed absolutely, as long as the viceroy over him could govern the kingdom as absolutely."

1. 35. **Godolphin.** See note on § 15 of this Essay. Sidney Godolphin was in power when Marlborough triumphed over the forces of Louis XIV at Blenheim, Oudenarde, and Malplaquet.

## § 84

page 50, l. 24. **with little success.** The design of these expeditions was to relieve the English and their allies in Germany by drawing off some of the French soldiers in defence of the coast, and at the same time to keep French ships from sailing to the help of Cape Breton, which was being besieged by the English. The second part of the design was certainly successful, and the first part had the warm approval of Ferdinand of Brunswick, at that time commander-in-chief of our forces on the Continent.

1. 25. **Aix was taken, Rochefort threatened.** This ill-planned expedition was undertaken in September and October, 1757. It was suggested by information which Pitt derived from an adventurer, named Clarke, concerning the defences of Rochefort, a naval station on the Charente, which flows into the Bay of Biscay. When the English arrived off the mouth of the river, they took the island of Aix by bombardment. After that they were at a loss what to do. The French were by no means as unprepared as they had been represented. In addition, the town of Rochefort was ten miles up the Charente, and the English men-of-war could not lie nearer in than two miles from the proposed landing-place. There was a danger that the invaders, if the wind shifted to the west, might be cut off from their ships. In this condition of things the admirals and generals showed themselves irresolute, and lost in debates their only chance of striking an effective blow. Finally they sailed home without further achievement. One of the generals, Sir John Mordaunt, was court-martialled, but acquitted with honour. The naval and military authorities had looked unfavourably on the expedition from the first, and there is no injustice in crediting Pitt with the chief blame for the whole fiasco. While, however, the immediate object of the expedition was not attained, its remoter consequences in terrorizing and hampering the French must not be overlooked.

1. 26. **St. Maloes.** St. Malo is a seaport at the mouth of the Rance in Brittany. The expedition against it greatly resembled that against Rochefort. English troops were landed, and immediately withdrawn owing to the preparedness of the French. The damage done to French shipping and dockyards was estimated at £800,000. The date of the expedition was June, 1758.

1. 27. **mortars,** short pieces of ordnance with a large bore, used for throwing bombs.

1. 28. **Cherbourg.** This seaport and naval station is situated in the department of La Manche. The English troops effected a successful landing in August, 1758, and destroyed the harbour-piers, the batteries, and the magazines, and brought away upwards of 200 pieces of ordnance. These last were exhibited in Hyde Park, and then conveyed with great ceremony to the Tower. Macaulay omits to mention the unfortunate affair of St. Cas. Our troops landed, roamed about the country without purpose for some days, and then on the approach of the French made for the coast, and re-embarked with serious losses under a galling fire. After this Pitt abandoned his idea of making descents on the French coast. Writing of these expeditions, Walpole remarks that the commanders seemed to be despatched, so scanty was their intelligence, to discover the coast of France, rather than to master it.

1. 34. **Louisburg.** This town was then the capital of Cape Breton, an island off Nova Scotia. Cape Breton, originally colonized by the French in 1712, was captured by the English in 1745. At the peace of Aix-la-Chapelle it was restored to the French in exchange for Madras. An English fleet under Boscawen, carrying 12,000 troops, with Amherst and Wolfe in chief command, began the siege of Louisburg on June 2, 1758. The capitulation took place on July 27. Six thousand prisoners of war were taken, and the French fleet in the harbour was entirely destroyed. The whole island fell into our hands, and its possession was ratified to us by the Peace of Paris in 1763.

**page 51, l. 1. Versailles,** about 10 miles from Paris, and originally a hunting-seat of the French kings, became in the course of time their ordinary residence.

1. 3. **Kensington Palace** was purchased by William III from the Earl of Nottingham.

1. 10. **the Grand Alliance.** Two alliances in which England joined with several continental powers to check the designs of Louis XIV are called by this name, one in 1689, the other in 1701. The latter alliance, followed as it was by the great victories of Marlborough, is here alluded to.

## § 85

1. 13. **Goree** is a small island off Cape Verde on the west coast of Africa. It was restored to France by the Peace of Paris, 1763.

**Guadeloupe** is one of the Windward Islands in the West Indies. Like Goree, it was restored to France in 1763.

**Ticonderoga,** a French fort on the shore of Lake Champlain in the north-eastern corner of the United States, surrendered to General Amherst in July, 1759.

1. 14. **Niagara**, a French fort at the head of Lake Erie, was captured by Sir William Johnson two days before the fall of Ticonderoga.

1. 15. **Cape Lagos**. Boscawen, stationed at Gibraltar, was on the look-out for the French squadron, which De la Clue wished to bring out of Toulon, and take through the Strait of Gibraltar, in order to effect a junction with the Brest squadron under Conflans. The French admiral almost succeeded in giving Boscawen the slip. A running fight began on the 18th of August and continued till the 19th. The French lost five ships out of twelve. The action ended off Lagos at the southern extremity of Portugal.

1. 17. **heights of Abraham**. On the 27th of April Wolfe landed his troops on the Isle of Orleans, four miles below Quebec. In Quebec itself, and near to it, were the French strongly entrenched. Four months passed without any advantage to the English arms, and Wolfe was almost reduced to despair. As a last chance, he attempted to effect a landing under cover of night at a point now called Wolfe's Cove, a mile and a half above Quebec. The French were taken by surprise, the English scrambled up the precipitous bank, and at daybreak 4500 of our men were on the heights behind the town. The French general, Montcalm, led out his troops to battle at once, so that the English might have no time to strengthen their position. Wolfe advanced his men to the plains of Abraham, an open plateau within a mile of Quebec. Here the battle was fought, which cost the lives of Wolfe and Montcalm, and secured Canada to the English (September 13, 1759).

11. 17, 18. **The news . . . reached London**. On the 14th of October Pitt received an extremely desponding letter from Wolfe. Three days later came the news of his victory and death.

## § 86

1. 28. **Brest**. The French fleet stationed at Brest, a seaport on the coast of Brittany, was intended to join the Toulon fleet in a descent on the shores of Great Britain. The fate of the latter fleet has already been recorded. The Brest fleet meanwhile was blockaded by Sir Edward Hawke, and could not put out to sea. Bad weather, however, came on, and Hawke had to shelter in Torbay. Conflans then took his opportunity and sailed out of Brest; but Hawke, guessing his adversary's movements, overtook him in Quiberon Bay, at the mouth of the river Vilaine, and inflicted the defeat here described (November 20, 1759).

## § 87

page 52, l. 10. **Montreal** is built on an island in the St. Lawrence. Here the French made their last stand, and when they surrendered the town to Amherst, the English conquest of Canada was complete.

## § 88

l. 16. **Cortes and Pizarro.** The achievements of these great Spanish soldiers belong to the early part of the sixteenth century. The former conquered Mexico, the latter Peru. In the opening paragraph of his essay on Clive, Macaulay once again contrasts the foundation of the Spanish Empire in America with the foundation of the British Empire in India.

l. 17. **In the space of three years.** By the battle of Plassey (1757) the English became supreme in northern India; by the capture of Pondicherry (1761) they became supreme in the south.

l. 19. **Chandernagore.** This French settlement was on the river Hooghly, about forty miles higher up than Calcutta. It surrendered to Clive on the 23rd of March, 1757.

l. 20. **Pondicherry.** This was the chief French settlement in India. It is on the coast of the Carnatic, and seventy miles south of Madras. Sir Eyre Coote captured it on the 16th of January, 1761.

**Bengal, &c.** The provinces of Bengal and Bahar are situated in the north-east of India; Orissa lies south of Bengal, and the Carnatic south of Orissa. Taken together, these districts comprise all the eastern coast of India. Macaulay is here anticipating events somewhat. It was not until 1765 that the Mogul emperor conferred on the English the right to administer the affairs of Bengal, Bahar, and Orissa.

l. 22. **East India Company.** This famous company was established in 1600, began to expand into an empire in 1757 with the victory of Plassey, and came to an end in 1858 after the suppression of the Mutiny.

l. 23. **Acbar,** one of the greatest Mogul emperors, consolidated the empire which his grandfather, Baber, had won. He belongs to the time of Queen Elizabeth.

**Aurungzebe,** the last Mogul emperor of striking ability, endeavoured to add southern India to his rule. He died in 1707, worn out by his exertions. Though he succeeded in enlarging his dominions, his success was only temporary, and after his death the empire rapidly split up into separate and independent states.

## § 89

1. 31. **further than Carteret.** A distinction must be made between the continental policy of Carteret and that of Pitt. Carteret looked merely to preserving the balance of power in Europe, and preventing France from becoming predominant, while Pitt desired to give France so much work to do in Europe that it would be unable to defend its American and Indian possessions against England. With Carteret the continental struggle was an object in itself; with Pitt it was subsidiary to a much more important conflict.

1. 33. **pecuniary assistance.** The exact amount was £670,000 annually.

**page 53, l. 7. conquer America for them in Germany.** See the first note on the present paragraph.

1. 25. **fiddle-faddle, unnecessary fuss.**

1. 26. **Hessian horse or saddle,** a reference to the system of hiring troops from the small German princes.

## § 90

1. 35. **in the hands of France.** Pitt came into office on the 28th of June, 1757. The Duke of Cumberland, commander of the English forces on the Continent, was defeated at Hastenbeck on the 26th of July, and on the 8th of September signed the Convention of Klosterseven, by which Hanover was left in the hands of the French. An engagement was made at the same time that the troops in the English pay should retire to their several countries. This Convention was not kept by the English, the excuse being that the French had infringed it in certain particulars.

**page 54, l. 5. Prince Ferdinand of Brunswick (1721-1792)** was one of the most brilliant soldiers of his day, and stood high in the esteem of Frederick the Great. For five years he held the supreme command of the British forces in Germany. Though he was handicapped by inferiority in numbers, by the mixed nature of his troops, and by the incapacity of his officers, yet his energy and ability were such that he not only kept the French at bay but even won victories over them.

1. 7. **Crevelt** is a town a little to the west of the Rhine in the Rhine Province. Here Ferdinand defeated the French under the Count de Clermont. The French lost 7000 men.

1. 8. **Minden.** At this place, which is in Westphalia, the French suffered defeat at the hands of Ferdinand, with a loss of 7000 men and 30 cannon. The victory would have proved even more decisive, if Lord George Sackville, actuated appa-



rently by jealousy of Ferdinand, had not hesitated in bringing up the British cavalry when ordered to do so. The French general was De Contades.

### § 91

l. 15. Guildhall, the building belonging to the municipal government of London.

### § 92

l. 22. the expense of the war never entered into Pitt's

who are never to be paid with words instead of figures, he kept aloof from all details, drew magnificent plans, and left others to find the magnificent means".

l. 33. his son. William Pitt, the younger, was Prime Minister in 1793, when the great struggle between England and revolutionary France began. He was active in forming coalitions, lavish in subsidizing our allies; but the coalitions fell to pieces, and the French armies carried all before them. It was only on the sea that the English asserted their superiority. Pitt died in 1806, while the conflict was still at its height, three months after the triumph and death of Nelson at Trafalgar, and almost three years before Wellington set out for Portugal, there to enter upon a series of victories which culminated in Waterloo.

### § 93

page 55, l. 1. as a war minister. A reference to the notes on § 84 will furnish proof that the French expeditions were badly planned. The Canadian campaign of 1759 was equally faulty in its conception. Three armies working along three different routes were to meet at Quebec. Amherst, capturing Ticonderoga, was to approach by the south; Prideaux and Johnson, capturing Niagara, by the west; Wolfe, sailing up the St. Lawrence, by the east. In such a wild, uncivilized country the combination was almost impossible, and, as a matter of fact, Wolfe was the only one who reached the proposed rendezvous within the year.

### § 94

l. 23. this was undoubtedly his work. "Lord Chatham", said Dr. Johnson, as reported by Boswell, "was a Dictator; he possessed the power of putting the state in motion."

page 56, l. 1. Lord George Sackville. It is impossible to determine whether Sackville's conduct in not bringing up the

British cavalry at Minden, when commanded to do so by Prince Ferdinand, was the result of cowardice, of ambiguity in the orders sent to him, or of a desire to spoil the completeness of the Prince's victory. On his return to England he found the king and the people almost as much excited against him as they had been against Byng. He demanded a court-martial, but the enquiry was unfavourable, and he was dismissed the service.

l. 6. **fops and intriguers of Versailles**, a truly British way of describing the advisers of the French king.

### § 95

l. 20. **the first Englishman of his time**. "His ambition", says Horace Walpole, "was to be the most illustrious man of the first country in Europe."

l. 22. **Commoner**, one who has not been raised to the peerage.

l. 25. **as quiet as it had been under Pelham**. See note on § 82.

### § 96

**page 57, l. 7. England set against Scotland**. This ill-feeling was mainly the result of the favouritism shown to the Earl of Bute, who became Prime Minister in 1762.

l. 9. **a rival legislature sitting beyond the Atlantic**. The first Congress of the United States met at Philadelphia in 1774.

l. 10. **our armies capitulating**, as at Saratoga in 1777.

l. 11. **our enemies hastening to take vengeance**. In 1777 the French sent help to the Americans, and in the following year recognized the independence of the United States.



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